

SPRING PREVIEW! THE 15 MUST-SEE MOVIES

#920 • FEBRUARY 9, 2007

Entertainment WEEKLY

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—JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

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Grammys!*

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JUSTIN
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EW gets serious and silly with Justin Timberlake, the boy-band grad who turns out to be the real deal. BY CLARK COLLIS

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ON THE COVER

Justin Timberlake photographed for EW by Martin Schoeller on December 12, 2006, in New York City.

At Sundance, Mandy Moore starred as a budding illustrator coping with a domineering mother and cranky co-worker—now that's 'Dedication'

PAGE

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(COVER) STYLING: ANNIE PSALTIRAS/BEAUTY & PHOTO: GROOMING: KIM VERBECK/CLARINS MENS LINE/EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS: SHIRT: YVES SAINT LAURENT; TUXEDO: J. LINDBERGH

Feedback



Honoring an Idol

James Brown should have been on the cover (#915)... Instead, I'm left to chew on *American Idol*'s Ryan Seacrest, Paula Abdul, Randy Jackson, and Simon Cowell—about as tasty a dish as wet cardboard.

Kim Lanclos
Opelousas, La.

Grand Dames

Your cover with Judi Dench, Helen Mirren, and Meryl Streep (#916) was shockingly powerful and makes one proud to be a woman! It's on my fridge. I hope this wisdom and power of full-grown women doesn't come and go like a pebble in the ocean.

Lauren Hutton
Venice, Calif.

Thanks for the interview with a group of classy actresses ("Silver Streak"). With all the faux movie stars around, it's nice to see people who make films because of a real passion for acting. Mirren, Dench, and Streep truly deserve the admiration they've received over the years.

Chelsea Dutchak
Burlington, Ontario

Scheduling Conflict

Regarding Mark Harris' column (#916, The Final Cut) about why moving up the Academy Awards was a bad idea: Mr. Harris goes into a long discourse on how shortening the Oscar season has resulted in all kinds of real and imagined disaster scenarios.

The thrust of his argument seems to be that Academy members don't have enough time to see all the movies, and therefore make uninformed choices. For the record, I have been a proud member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for almost 30 years, and despite a somewhat busy schedule, I have had no problem watching all the movies that have been singled out for Academy consideration, most of which I've made a point of seeing in theaters.

Trying to curb the circus-like atmosphere that had begun to creep into the Academy season was and is a good thing. Before the schedule was changed,

the proliferation of "wannabe" awards shows had reached an untenable level, with many copycats dressing up their shows in a fake patina of artistic achievement when all they really were about was profit. Furthermore, to my knowledge, no filmmaker, executive, or actor has agreed with Mr. Harris' assessment of the new Academy calendar.

The Academy Award remains the most prestigious honor that our industry can bestow on an artist; any and all efforts to maintain its integrity and status should be applauded, not attacked or second-guessed.

Jeffrey Katzenberg
CEO DreamWorks Animation
Glendale, Calif.

CORRECTIONS Due to a technical error, *Forest Whitaker's first name was misspelled on covers of a number of copies of issue #918/919 (Feb. 2). 'Alpha Dog' is a Universal release (#916, Movies).*

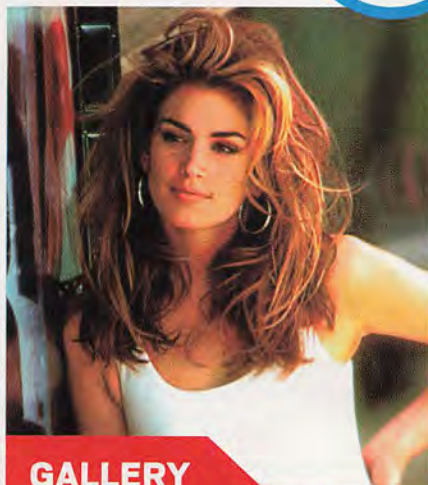
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Oscar Experts

From now until the big night, join our expert panel of Dave Karger, Peter Bonventre, Mark Harris, Jill Bernstein, Thom Geier, and Robert Osborne as they each weigh in with their winning picks.

London Calling!

In his brand-new weekly column for EW.com, the new-bands editor for Britain's *NME*, James Jam, hips us to everything worthwhile happening music-wise from across the pond.

EW.COM POLL

Which band reunion are you most excited about?*

Genesis
The Police
The Stooges
The Smashing Pumpkins
Rage Against the Machine

*See the next issue for results

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

What is Eddie Murphy's best role?

34% Donkey, *Shrek*

23% Prince Akeem, *Coming to America*

18% Billy Ray Valentine, *Trading Places*

13% Reggie Hammond, *48 HRS.*

12% James "Thunder" Early, *Dreamgirls*



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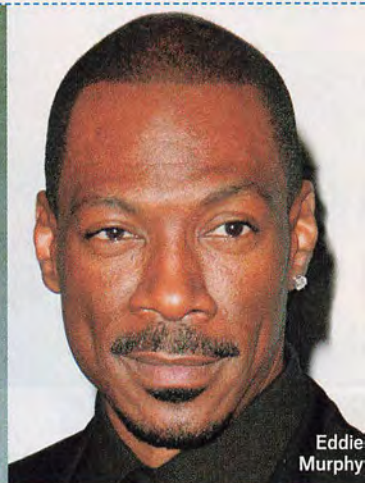
NICOLE KIDMAN • 'AN IDOL' FAVORITES • OK GO'S WACKY NEW VIDEO • GRAMMY PREDICTIONS • OSCAR WATCH



Jennifer Lopez



Michelle Pfeiffer



Eddie Murphy



Hugh Grant



Jennifer Garner

Their Next Big Things

CAREER 411 Five established stars are making bold (and sometimes risky) moves in the months ahead. Will 2007 prove to be their lucky year?

They're versatile performers with a knack for (usually) making the right choices. They're also staring down a new year that could change the course of their careers. Here's how 2007 might make—or break—five of Hollywood's biggest names.

JENNIFER GARNER

Making the permanent switch from TV glory to big-screen legitimacy can be tough. Just ask Jennifer Aniston. Or the affable Garner, 34, who's trying to break free from the career choke hold that is *Alias*' Sydney Bristow. She got off to a nice start in 2004 with *13 Going on 30*, which made \$57 million. And after a baby break, she



From top: Garner (left) in *The Kingdom*; Pfeiffer in *Hairspray*; Lopez and Anthony in *El Cantante*; Murphy (and Murphy) in *Norbit*

resurfaced last month with the much-delayed *Catch and Release*. While the tearjerker's \$8 million opening weekend was so-so, women comprised 69 percent of its audience. That bodes well for her most recently signed project, *Juno*, in which she plays a woman hoping to adopt a baby. "It's unlike anything she's done," says *Juno* director Jason Reitman. "To be doing this movie a year after she became a mother? It's perfect research." But will Garner's target demo care about her next film, the male-skewing FBI thriller *The Kingdom* (out April 20)? *Kingdom* director Peter Berg thinks so: "She's got this ability to play girl-next-door and fierce warrior at the same time. That reminds me of Sigourney Weaver when [she] was doing *Alien*." And she's still working, so that's a good sign.

HUGH GRANT

Audiences have always preferred Grant as the stammering-yet-charming comedic leading man. He branched out and earned raves in 2002 with a more dramatic role in *About a Boy*, but the one time Grant really tried to stretch—as a slimy reality-show judge in the 2006 political parody *American Dreamz*—the movie flopped. So this year, he's back to his cutesy comfort zone, playing a washed-up pop star who woos Drew Barrymore in *Music and Lyrics* (out Feb. 14, natch). But this may be your last chance to catch him for a while: Grant, 46, has no agent and no new projects planned. "[Hugh] is quite content *not* working," says *Music and Lyrics* director Marc Lawrence. "I think he sometimes views acting as unworthy of a mature adult's time.... It certainly is not for lack of people begging him to do stuff." Provided, of course, there's stammering involved.

MICHELLE PFEIFFER

This is a pivotal year for the 48-year-old Oscar nominee, who hasn't been seen since 2002's *White Oleander*: She'll play an evil witch in the sci-fi fantasy *Stardust* (out July 27), a stage mother in a film based on the Broadway musical *Hairspray* (out July 20), and a mom who falls for a younger man (Paul Rudd) in the romantic comedy *I Could Never Be Your Woman*. But her comeback is off to a slightly rocky start: *Woman*, which was slated by MGM to hit theaters in March, has been pulled from the release schedule. (The studio declined comment, but financier Bauer Martinez says they will release *Woman* this June.) Fortunately for Pfeiffer, public goodwill may yet revitalize her career. Says *Stardust* producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura, "When [test audiences] see the movie, they say, 'It's so great to have her back!'"

JENNIFER LOPEZ

After years of ubiquity, even Lopez was getting tired of herself. "It was all J. Lo, all the time!" the 37-year-old says. "I pulled back a bit." Now the multi-hyphenate has a comeback in the works: "I started gravitating toward projects that were important to me." Along with her current MTV reality series, *Dancelife* (an homage to her early days as a Fly Girl), and her first Spanish-language CD, *Como Ama Una Mujer* (out April 3), Lopez's 2007 films also hew to her roots: She costars with hubby Marc Anthony in *El Cantante*, a biopic of salsa singer Héctor Lavoe (due July 27), and will also headline the Mexican crime thriller *Bordertown* with Antonio Banderas. If that doesn't do it, Lopez has one last trump card: An English-language CD—"a fun dance record with soul"—arrives later this year.

EDDIE MURPHY

Following his Oscar-nominated turn in *Dreamgirls* as R&B singer James "Thunder" Early, one might expect

Murphy to take on riskier roles, like, say, playing James Brown in Spike Lee's planned biopic. Nope: After his slapstick romance *Norbit* opens on Feb. 9, Murphy shoots the sci-fi comedy *Starship Dave*. And he recently announced plans for the fantastical family film *Nowhereland*, along with a fourth *Beverly Hills Cop* movie. DreamWorks cofounder and good friend Jeffrey Katzenberg says Murphy, 45, has no desire to stretch for stretching's sake: "Some actors are interested in going somewhere they've never gone before—if they're dramatic actors they want to be comedians, if they're action heroes they want to be Shakespearean actors. That's just not who Eddie is." ■ (Written and reported by Vanessa Juarez, Josh Rottenberg, Hannah Tucker, Adam B. Vary, and Margeaux Watson)

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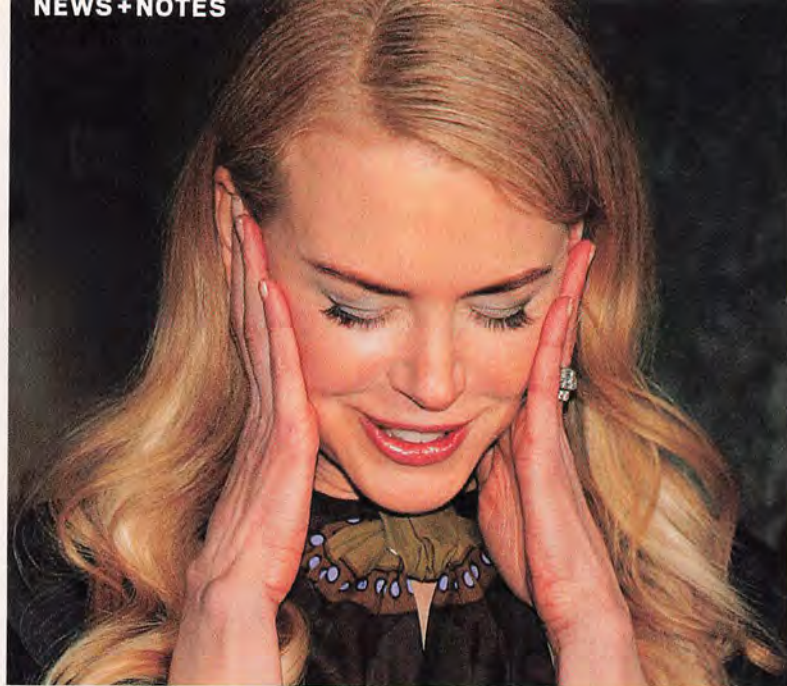
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Taxed 'Invasion'

Nicole Kidman's on-set accident is just the latest obstacle for her long-delayed sci-fi thriller. **BY TIM STACK**



CRAIG'S LIST

What's next for the 'Invasion' costar?

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

He's with Kidman again for Dec. 7's fantasy epic.

BOND 22

007 returns in Nov. '08.

I, LUCIFER

(Currently in preproduction.) He'll make a handsome devil in this dark comedy based on Glen Duncan's 2002 novel.

Nicole Kidman may have to fend off malicious extraterrestrials in her upcoming sci-fi thriller *The Invasion*, but she had much bigger problems to deal with after an on-set car accident Jan. 25 briefly sent her to an L.A. hospital. The crash—which happened when a stunt car in which she was riding slammed into a pole—was just the latest crimp for the long-gestating project, a loose remake of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.

It began shooting in September 2005 with Kidman (who earned a reported career-record \$16 million paycheck) and a little-known British actor named Daniel Craig. At first, the problems were minor: Producers changed the title to *The Visiting* to avoid confusion with the ABC series *Invasion*. (The original title was restored after the show's cancellation.) The film then missed its scheduled August 2006 release date without explanation. So while Warner Bros. execs had to be happy that nobody was seriously injured in the recent wreck, the inadvertent revelation that *Invasion* was still filming raises a pesky question: Why isn't this movie—now slated to bow on Aug. 17—finished yet? A Warner Bros. spokesman declined to comment, but it's possible that the studio chose to ramp up Craig's role to capitalize on his newfound popularity as James Bond. And given that Kidman was filming an automobile chase, the action may be getting a boost to lure summer movie audiences. At least, that's our guess. Like any good invasion, though, details are being kept secret.

HITLIST

By Scott Brown

1 Sean Connery may return as Indiana Jones' dad—if the script works Around about Act 3, Connery is looking for a specific plot point: \$15 million tucked between the pages.

2 George Lopez wants to start a feud with Jay Leno They will duel by marching 30 paces, turning, and not being funny.

3 On set, Will Smith warms freezing extras with rap *Survival* tip: Nothing burns like old D.J. Jazzy Jeff backing tracks.

4 Mariah Carey graces *Playboy* cover With this and a time machine, I will soon be the awesomest kid in 1991.



5 U.K. reality show searches for "real" Harry Potter This, from the producers who brought you *The Real Star Wars: Can YOU Breathe in Space?*

6 Sudoku to be subject of mystery novel Mary Higgins Clark goes a little nuts when she's stumped.

7 Critics say Kevin Federline-as-fry-cook Super Bowl ad demeans fast-food workers When your image can degrade the guy who cleans the meat hose at the local taco shack...that's power, boy.



Anglican "U2charist" service replaces hymns with U2 songs Not to be outdone, the mosque next door is blasting Cat Stevens.

8

9 Alfred Hitchcock said Steven Spielberg made him feel like a whore Spielberg, it seems, doesn't snuggle after an homage.

10 Celebrity to tutor virgins in ways of love in proposed reality show *I smell Sizemore!* But that may be unrelated.

For all the latest headlines, pictures, and ridiculous Hollywood miscellany, visit popwatch.ew.com

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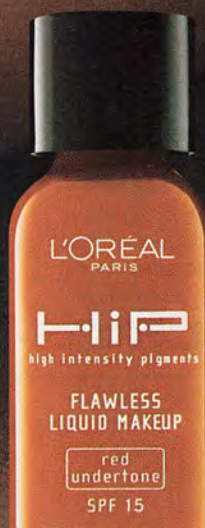
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**FIRST
LOOK**

OK GO'S NEW VIDEO

A treadmill triumph made the band's last video a YouTube standout. But for their new clip, they plan to blend right in. **BY VANESSA JUAREZ**



OK Go's Dan Konopka, Tim Nordwind, Kulash, and Andy Ross

How will alt-rockers OK Go top their home-made "Here It Goes Again" treadmill dance, which has been viewed more than 15 million times on YouTube? Simple: "We decided not to try," says lead singer Damian Kulash about the band's next video, "Do What You Want" (out later this month). "I mean, there's no way to escape your own internal pressure." But Kulash may be underplaying things a bit. When EW swung by the trippy set for "Want" in Los Angeles, a dizzying array of

characters—a hula-hooper, Segway riders, a pogo-hopper, ninjas—were all camouflaged from head to toe in a paisley design similar to the one found on the cover of OK's album, *Oh No*. (Needless to say, this reporter signed up to be an extra.) "It's only one color, so we wanted the widest range of movement," says Kulash of the concept. Besides, he adds, "everybody's waiting for our next dance routine, when in reality, I think they're waiting to be confused again."

Is It Just Us?

Guess not. Songwriter Carole Bayer Sager's gotten comparisons to Joan Collins since she was 16. "I remember going to see Bette Midler, and people started screaming 'Joan, please give us your autograph!' So I wrote 'Love, Joan Collins' on everything...I didn't want to disappoint all these people."



BAYER SAGER AS A GUEST JUDGE ON 'IDOL'



COLLINS ON 'DYNASTY'



'IDOL' WATCH

Michael Slezak on four of his early favorites



JASON "SUNDANCE" HEAD

Everything about the son of '60s hitmaker Roy Head—his voice, his beard, his personality—was big and delightful. Even Simon dug him!



PORCELANA PATINO

This peculiar bleach-blonde looked like another *Idol* punchline—until her fierce, rock-tinged rendition of Mary J. Blige's "Love No Limit."



SANJAYA MALAKAR

Outperformed his big sister by tackling a Stevie Wonder number with merciful restraint; if he just loses the Gayle King haircut, he'll fit right in.



CHRIS SLIGH

The Jack Osbourne look-alike's take on "Kiss From a Rose" was Birmingham's best. Plus, he made the judges laugh—intentionally.

For all the latest *American Idol* updates, go to EW.com



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Grammy Gold Rush

We predict who will (and should) take home five of the big awards on Feb. 11.

BY LEAH GREENBLATT



Red Hot Chili Peppers

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

TAKING THE LONG WAY DIXIE CHICKS ▶

ST. ELSEWHERE GNARLS BARKLEY

CONTINUUM JOHN MAYER

STADIUM ARCADIUM RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

FUTURESEX/LOVESOUNDS JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE



WHO SHOULD WIN *Gnarls.*

Their expansive debut was both of the moment and totally timeless. WHO WILL WIN So what if Nashville hates 'em? The Chicks are likely to charm the more liberal Grammy voters.

RECORD OF THE YEAR

BE WITHOUT YOU MARY J. BLIGE

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL JAMES BLUNT

NOT READY TO MAKE NICE DIXIE CHICKS

CRAZY GNARLS BARKLEY ▶

PUT YOUR RECORDS ON CORINNE BAILEY RAE



WHO SHOULD WIN *Call us, y'know, crazy...but we're all about Gnarls' sheer sonic ambition. WHO WILL WIN It's never wise to count out the Chicks, but with a show-leading eight nods, Blige seems poised to sweep.*

BEST POP PERFORMANCE (DUO OR GROUP)

MY HUMPS BLACK EYED PEAS

I WILL FOLLOW YOU INTO THE DARK DEATH CAB...

OVER MY HEAD (CABLE CAR) THE FRAY ▶

IS IT ANY WONDER? KEANE

STICKWITU THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS



WHO SHOULD WIN *The Fray. Sometimes we just like to see nice guys finish first. WHO WILL WIN The night's oddest lineup (the Dolls and the Peas versus all of those whiny emo boys? Jeepers!) will wind up in a Fray.*

SONG OF THE YEAR (AWARDED TO SONGWRITER)

BE WITHOUT YOU MARY J. BLIGE ▶

JESUS, TAKE THE WHEEL CARRIE UNDERWOOD

NOT READY TO MAKE NICE DIXIE CHICKS

PUT YOUR RECORDS ON CORINNE BAILEY RAE

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL JAMES BLUNT



WHO SHOULD WIN *That sound you hear? Oh, that's just us, whistling Dixie. WHO WILL WIN A strong category (save Blunt's too-repetitive ditty), but voters won't be able to deny the pull of noblesse o' Blige.*

BEST NEW ARTIST

JAMES BLUNT

CHRIS BROWN

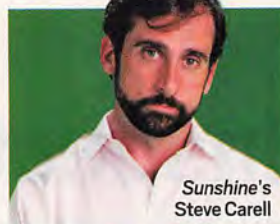
IMOGEN HEAP

CORINNE BAILEY RAE

CARRIE UNDERWOOD ▶



WHO SHOULD WIN *Reader, take the wheel: We vote for Carrie. WHO WILL WIN Rae and Heap aren't well-known enough; Brown's too slight; and the Blunt backlash is strong. Country music had a huge year, so this is Underwood's to lose.*



Sunshine's Steve Carell

OSCAR WATCH

The Screen Actors Guild rewards Oscar favorites—and mixes up the Best Picture race. —Dave Karger

Since 19 out of 20 of SAG's film acting nominees matched up with Oscar nods, it's no surprise that the Screen Actors Guild Awards (held Jan. 28) were a fairly predictable affair. The four individual prizes went to the current front-runners: *The Queen's* Helen Mirren and *The Last King of Scotland's* Forest Whitaker, as well as *Dreamgirls'* Jennifer Hudson and Eddie Murphy. Meanwhile, *Little Miss Sunshine's* best-ensemble win (SAG's equivalent of Best Picture) could rev up the Academy Awards race. In three out of the last four years—most notably in 2006, when *Crash* beat *Brokeback Mountain* for the best-cast prize—the SAG winner went on to score the Oscar. So could *Sunshine*, which also won the Producers Guild trophy, now be poised to upset *The Departed* and *Babel* come Feb. 25? Its chances are certainly improving, but consider a similar situation two years ago, when another charming indie, *Sideways*, took home the SAG award only to lose to a larger-scale film (*Million Dollar Baby*) on Oscar night. So it seems this fight will definitely come down to the final round.

Pilot Inspector

Here's the lowdown on eight intriguing dramas that could be coming to your TV this fall.

BY LYNETTE RICE

We always hear it during development season: *The broadcast networks are really taking chances on their dramas! They're definitely pushing the envelope!* Then they give us *Vanished* and *Shark*. But shockingly enough, that claim might hold true this year. A number of high-concept dramas featuring everything from wife-swappers to a robotically enhanced tennis pro are in the works for fall 2007. Take an early look at some of fall's most promising pilots.

VIVA LAUGHLIN (CBS) Hugh Jackman exec-produces and guest-stars in this murder mystery/musical (based on the BBC series *Viva Blackpool*) as a low-rent casino owner who wants to open a glitzy resort in Laughlin, Nev.

DEMONS (CBS) *Joan of Arcadia* creator Barbara Hall stays in familiar territory with this series about an ex-priest/psychologist who performs exorcisms and investigates supernatural phenomena.

SWINGTOWN (CBS) Get ready for an *Ice Storm*: Mike Kelley (*One Tree Hill*) wrote this '70s-set series about the effect wife-swapping and key parties have on the American family.

LIPSTICK JUNGLE (NBC) This dramedy from *Sex and the City* producer Darren Star—based on Candace Bushnell's book—focuses on three successful



From top, Jackman; the original *Bionic Woman*; (below) Union

fortysomething women who are lucky at work, but can't quite find their mojo at home.

BIONIC WOMAN (NBC) David Eick updated *Battlestar Galactica*, and now the producer is putting his spin on the popular Lindsay Wagner series. *Woman* follows an injured tennis pro who's healed using cutting-edge technology.

UNTITLED COCHRAN/EHRMAN PROJECT (FOX) In this thriller from 24's producing team, an ordinary Joe is forced to spy for the National Security Agency.

FOOTBALL WIVES (ABC) *Bring It On*'s Gabrielle Union headlines this soapy drama from *Ugly Betty*'s Marco Pennette. Based on the BBC series *Footballers Wives*, it follows the spoiled spouses of pro athletes. How campy is it? Union's character is named *Chardonnay*.

GOSSIP GIRL (THE CW) *The O.C.* creator Josh Schwartz looks to the East Coast—and the successful book series of the same name—for this drama about rich teenagers attending New York City prep schools.

SUNDANCE EDITION DEAL REPORT

MOVIES

★ This year's Sundance Film Festival really had studios opening their wallets. The Weinstein Co.'s **Harvey Weinstein** made out



FERRERA

like a bandit, spending \$5–6 million with Fox Searchlight for the immigration drama *La Misma Luna* (with **America Ferrera**), plus a reported \$2.5 mil with Lionsgate for the thriller *Teeth* and \$3–4 mil with First Look Pictures for *Dedication*, a quirky **Billy Crudup–Mandy Moore** romance. The latter deal thrilled director **Justin Theroux**: “No one’s [usually] tripping over themselves to give first-time directors a chance.”... **THINKFilm** and City Lights Pictures dropped \$4.5 mil on director **David Wain**'s ensemble comedy *The Ten* (with **Winona Ryder**).... First Look shelled out nearly \$3 mil for the **Michael Douglas** drama *King of California*.... And after Warner Independent bought family dramedy *Clubland* for \$4 mil, **Brenda**



DOUGLAS

Blethyn says her costars celebrated by “running into my room and jumping on my bed!” —**Adam B. Vary**, with additional reporting by Neil Drumming and Chris Nashawaty

The Shaw Report *By Jessica Shaw*

IN	FIVE MINUTES AGO	OUT
<i>Pinkberry</i>	<i>Cold Stone Creamery</i>	<i>Tasti D-Lite</i>
<i>ABC astro-Thursdays</i>	<i>HBO original Sundays</i>	<i>Fox 'COPS' Saturdays</i>
<i>The Kevin Costner Band</i>	<i>Juliette and the Licks</i>	<i>Dennis Quaid and the Sharks</i>

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Style

THE BEST OF BAD PITS

She may not have nabbed an Oscar nomination for *Dreamgirls*, but **BEYONCÉ** and her latest ubiquitous signature pose have been hard to miss on the red carpets. We asked body-language expert Patti Wood to weigh in on the singer-actress' stance and took a trip down armpit memory lane, where plenty of celebs have raised their hands ('cause they're sure?). **BY LINDSAY SOLL**

1. HANDS

"You have to be a pretty brave mama to be putting your hands on your head," Wood says. "It's typically a male posture. It's called 'the cape and the crown,' [which says] 'I'm in charge, I'm royalty.'"

2. ELBOWS

"They make the head appear larger, saying, 'I'm bigger than anybody else.' Also, it's very aggressive because of the sharp edges. It's read by the subconscious as an attack stance."

3. HIPS

"The provocative hip tilt is very Mae West. It means, 'Come here and have sex with me.'"

4. LEGS

"What she's doing is like a hula dancer!"

ANNA NICOLE SMITH 2005

A certain octogenarian magnet is clearly proud of her TrimSpa body (and her clear deodorant).

JULIETTE LEWIS 2006

Looks like the *Catch and Release* star is about to break into her own version of the chicken dance.

DIANA ROSS 1988

If this is how she says, "I'm coming out," then we're scared to see "Touch me in the morning."

FRAN DRESCHER 1997

Even by Drescherian standards, this late-20th-century look is especially unfortunate.

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Monitor

EXPECTING



Baby Spice is becoming a Baby Mama. **Emma Bunton**, 31, and her musician boyfriend, Jade Jones, 27, will welcome their first child this summer.

BIRTH



Kevin Nealon (*Weeds*), 53, and his wife, actress Susan Yeagley (*Almost Famous*), 35, greeted their first child together, son Gable Ness, on Jan. 29.

SPLITS

Anne Heche (*Men in Trees*), 37, and her cameraman husband of five years, Coley Laffoon, 33, separated Jan. 22. The couple has a son, 4-year-old Homer.... Former *'N Syncer* **Lance Bass**, 27, and *The Amazing Race* contestant **Reichen Lehmkuhl**, 33, have ended their relationship.

RECOVERING

On Jan. 25, **B.B. King**, 81, was admitted to a Galveston, Tex., hospital for two days. The blues legend, who was forced to cancel four shows, was treated for flu-like symptoms. His rep says King is now "back to his old self."...



Jennifer Aniston, 37, had surgery on Jan. 20

to fix a deviated septum. Her publicist says the procedure was intended to correct an operation she underwent more than 12 years ago.

CONTROVERSY

On Jan. 25, Paramount Pictures chairman and CEO **Brad Grey**, 49, was denied Oscar eligibility as a producer on *The Departed* by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The exec has argued that he was integral in developing the Warner Bros.



SIDNEY SHELDON 1917-2007

A best-selling author who also won a Tony (*Redhead*) and an Oscar (*The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer*), and was nominated for an Emmy (*I Dream of Jeannie*), Sheldon, 89, died from complications of pneumonia on Jan. 30. The novelist, whose books included *Rage of Angels* and *If Tomorrow Comes*, once said, "I write about beautiful, resourceful women and handsome, strong men set in glamorous locales so that my readers can...live vicariously through my characters." —TS

film, a Best Picture nominee, before taking his current post.

COMMENDED

In a surprising move, the Special Olympics has lauded *American Idol*'s judges for not giving preferential treatment to their former athlete Jonathan Jayne, 21, during his audition. **Simon Cowell**, 47, who didn't realize



Jayne was disabled, ignited controversy after joking about his weight.

In a statement, the Special Olympics said, "People with intellectual disabilities don't want to be pitied."

CONFIRMED

The Police will reunite for a performance at the Grammy Awards on CBS Feb. 11. Despite rampant speculation, no tour dates have been announced.

COURTS

A YouTube user who uploaded the first four episodes of 24's season 6 is wanted by someone just as powerful as Jack Bauer: **Rupert Murdoch**. On Jan. 19, Fox (which is owned by Murdoch's News Corp.) subpoenaed the file-sharing site to

reveal the identity of the subscriber, who also posted entire episodes of Fox's *The Simpsons*. A YouTube rep said they've removed the copyrighted material and "will comply with U.S. legal process."... Rapper **Snoop Dogg** (né Calvin Broadus), 35, pleaded not guilty Jan. 24 to a charge of possessing a deadly weapon. The rapper was apprehended in September 2006 after security screeners at a Santa Ana, Calif., airport said they found a collapsible police baton in his carry-on bag.... Model **Niki Taylor**, 31, filed a slander suit Jan. 26, demanding that E! Entertainment Television pay her \$1 million for emotional distress. The model claims she agreed to an interview with the network about her current life and busi-

As Seattle Grace Turns...

Last week on *Grey's Anatomy* (or at least in the drama surrounding the ABC hit), publicists did more damage control, smacking down rumors that T.R. Knight (left)—the target of costar Isaiah Washington's on-set antigay epithet—was considering leaving the show. ABC insists that's "irrefutably untrue"; Knight's rep called it "the silliest nonstory." As for Washington (or "the other one over in rehab," as castmate Chandra Wilson referred to him in her SAG award acceptance speech)? His publicist would not comment on the status of his treatment, but an ABC rep said he was slated to appear in February sweeps episodes, which began shooting this week. —Jennifer Armstrong



ness endeavors, only to see that footage used in an episode of *Blvd. of Broken Dreams*, a series about down-on-their-luck celebrities.

NEW DEAL



Law & Order: SVU stars **Mariska Hargitay**, 43, and

Christopher Meloni, 45, have signed on for two more seasons of the NBC drama. The new deals are said to each be worth more than \$6.5 million a year, making Hargitay one of television's highest-paid actresses.

DEATHS

David "Disco D" Shayman, 26, a hip-hop producer who worked with 50 Cent and Trick Daddy, of an

apparent suicide, Jan. 22, in Washington, D.C.... **Bob Carroll Jr.**, 88, a writer for *I Love Lucy*, of undisclosed causes, Jan. 27, in L.A.... **Doug Blasdel**, 44, a trainer on Bravo's *Work Out*, of kidney failure, Jan. 22, in L.A.... Set dresser **David Ritchie**, 56, who was fatally injured on the set of the Samuel L. Jackson action movie *Jumper*, Jan. 25, in Toronto. (Another worker was treated for a head injury and is expected to recover fully)... Model-actress **Marcheline Bertrand**, 56, mother of Angelina Jolie and ex-wife of Jon Voight, of cancer, Jan. 27, in L.A. —*Tanner Stransky, with additional reporting by Mandi Bierly and Hannah Tucker*

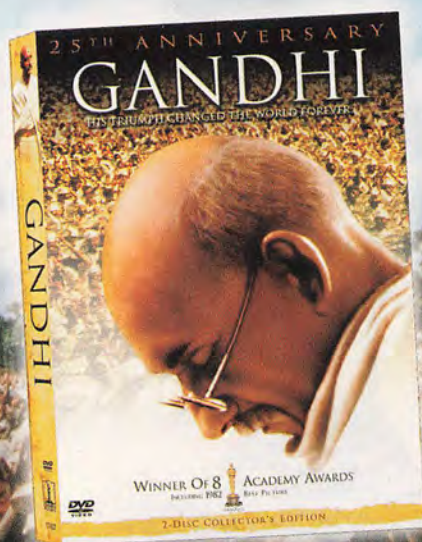
Brandy's Car Crash

As if being in a deadly automobile accident weren't bad enough, now R&B songstress Brandy, 27, could be facing a criminal charge and jail time. On Dec. 30, the former *Moesha* star was traveling 65 mph on the 405 freeway in Los Angeles when her Land Rover struck the back of a 2005 Toyota, setting off a chain-reaction collision that killed the Toyota's driver, 38-year-old Awatef Aboudihaj. After conducting an investigation, the California Highway Patrol recommended Jan. 29 that the Grammy winner and *America's Got Talent* judge be charged with misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter without gross negligence, which could result in up to a year in jail. (The case is currently sitting with the Los Angeles City Attorney's office for review.) In a statement issued Jan. 24, a rep for Brandy said: "She wishes to publicly express her condolences to the family of the deceased." Aboudihaj's family filed a civil suit Jan. 30 asking for up to \$50 million in damages. —*TS*



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SPOTLIGHT

PAUL RUDD GETS SWAG + QUEEN LATIFAH NAILS IT + RAINN WILSON'S FIRST SUNDANCE + WHAT'S ON GWYNETH PALTROW'S MIND?

Cheryl Hines,
Jeremy Sisto,
and Keri Russell
of sentimental
favorite *Waitress*

SPECIAL
FESTIVAL
REPORT!

SUNDANCE

A handy guide to the who's who of Park City's class of 2007. BY MISSY SCHWARTZ

As any Sundance veteran will tell you, debuting a movie at the snowcapped Rocky Mountain festival can be nerve-racking. You worry that people won't get your vision. That your film won't be picked up for distribution. That critics will eviscerate you. But none of those concerns could compare to the grief that consumed Keri Russell, Cheryl Hines, Jeremy Sisto, and Nathan Fillion before the world premiere of their movie, *Waitress*. A bitter-sweet comedy in which Russell plays a pregnant

woman desperate to get away from her jerk of a husband (Sisto), *Waitress* was written and directed by Adrienne Shelly, who was killed last November in New York City at age 40. Celebrating without Shelly, who also costarred, would be tough. "We're going to try to enjoy it," Hines says, forcing a smile. "But I know it's going to be emotional."

It was. Yet the movie turned out to be surprisingly upbeat, with an audience of 1,200 laughing and applauding throughout. Reviews were positive, and by the next morning, mini-major Fox Searchlight had scooped up *Waitress* for \$4 million. "It was everything we ever hoped for," says producer Michael Roiff. "Not being able to hug Adrienne on a snowy Park City street corner and celebrate our premiere was horrible, devastating. But I know how over the moon she would be right now.... The best way I can honor her memory is by making sure people see her film."

The happy ending for *Waitress* helped ensure Shelly's legacy and proved that the 23-year-old festival founded by Robert Redford is still a powerful platform for worthy little films in need of a boost. Sundance has been criticized for having outgrown its purebred indie roots, but this year the marketplace was as fertile as ever, with distributors eagerly gobbling up 18 movies for more than \$50 million in less than 10 days. And while Park City's Main Street once again bustled with swag suites doling out everything from lightbulbs to \$6,000 vacation packages, the focus seemed to have shifted back to the films.

"It's really satisfying to me, [as someone] who's been coming here for so long, to see people like Zoe Cassavetes or Jim Strouse having their moment," notes Steve Buscemi of the directors of the romantic dramedy *Broken English* and Dramatic Audience Award winner *Grace Is Gone*, respectively. (Buscemi was promoting *Interview*, which he directed and co-wrote, starring Sienna Miller.) "There's a great sharing of ideas."

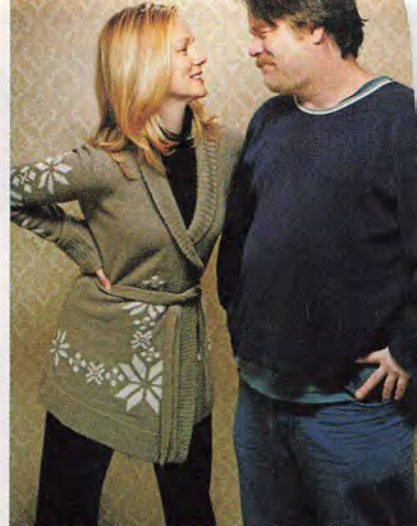
Here, some of Sundance 2007's standouts share *their* thoughts on this year's fest.

John Cusack's performance in *Grace Is Gone*, as a grieving man afraid to tell his daughters their mother has died in Iraq, generated some of the best buzz and helped the film snag one of the first distribution deals (by the Weinstein Co., for a reported \$4 mil). Still, even he had trouble scoring seats. "We couldn't even get tickets to our own premiere—only two!" Cusack says.

Garth Jennings, writer-director of the British comedy *Son of Rambow*, left Park City with an \$8 million deal from Paramount Vantage—the year's highest price tag—for his movie about two Rambo-obsessed kids in the 1980s. "I feel like we were the Cinderella story," says Jennings



Nick Cannon shows attitude in the altitude, looking as hip-hop as his revenge-obsessed character does in *'Weapons.'*



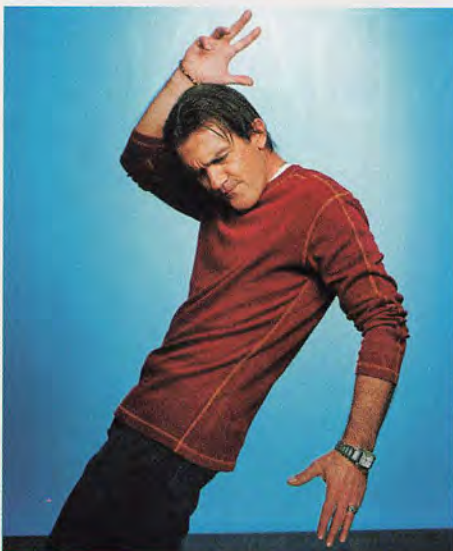
Laura Linney & Philip Seymour Hoffman squared off in the coming-of-middle-age story *'The Savages.'*



Robin Wright Penn & Dakota Fanning kept their poise as controversy swirled around the child-abuse tale *'Hounddog.'*



Parker Posey did double duty, flying in to attend two premieres: *'Broken English'* and *'Fay Grim.'*



Antonio Banderas returned to his roots to make his sophomore directing effort, the Spanish-language *'Summer Rain.'*



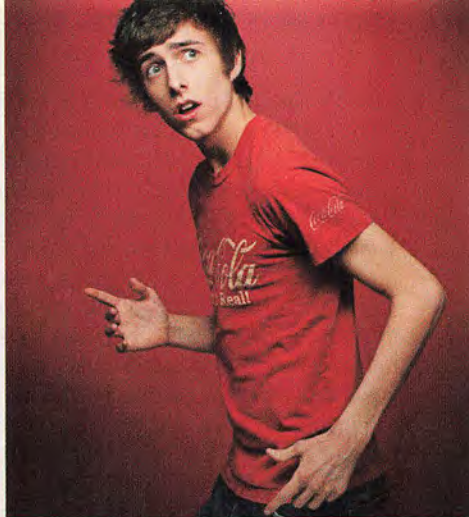
Sienna Miller & Steve Buscemi costarred in *'Interview,'* which he also co-wrote and directed.



John C. Reilly caters to a canine while promoting Mike ('The Good Girl') White's animal rights comedy, 'Year of the Dog.'



Josh Hartnett, Kathryn Morris, Alan Alda & Teri Hatcher gang up for director Rod Lurie's poignant 'Resurrecting the Champ.'



Reece Daniel Thompson earned raves as one of this year's breakouts for the high school comedy 'Rocket Science.'



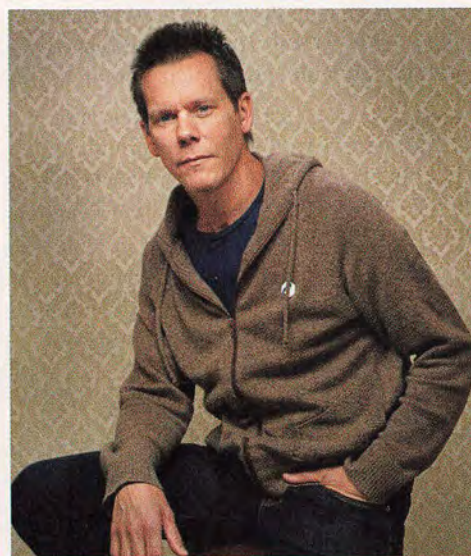
Justin Theroux, Mandy Moore & Billy Crudup come together for Theroux's directorial debut, the romantic comedy 'Dedication.'



Evan Rachel Wood, a Sundance phenom off 2003's 'Thirteen,' is dealt a dysfunctional dad (Michael Douglas) in 'King of California.'



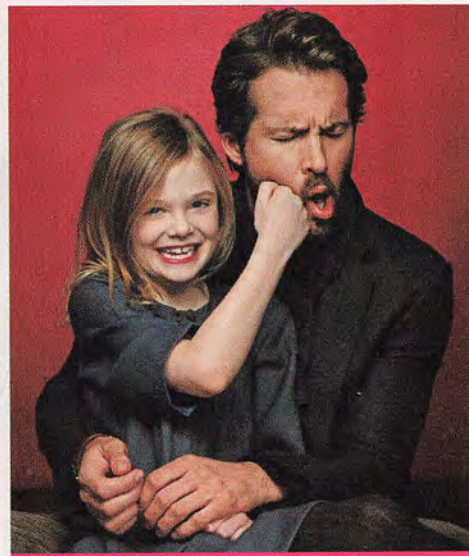
Justin Timberlake, Christina Ricci & Samuel L. Jackson raised eyebrows with the nympho love story 'Black Snake Moan.'



Kevin Bacon came to Park City to launch SixDegrees.org, his website that helps people donate to celebs' favorite charities.



Zoey Deschanel & Lou Taylor Pucci treated festivalgoers to the uplifting road-trip dramedy 'The Go-Getter.'



Elle Fanning & Ryan Reynolds find themselves playing three different characters in a trio of tales in 'The Nines.'

(2005's *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*). "Ours is a film with no stars and wasn't a sure thing. I had no idea what to expect.... It hadn't been seen by more than 10 people before the festival."

Parker Posey is "pitch-perfect." That's how *Variety* described her turn as a lonely Manhattanite in *Broken English*. "Yeah, I heard that all day from the publicist!" laughs the fest vet, also promoting the Hal Hartley drama *Fay Grim*. "I'm happy my work is acknowledged because Hollywood doesn't know what to do with me," she says, shrugging. "It's not easy for me to get parts in the so-called indie movies produced [by studios] now." Posey even has a term for them: *stindies*.

Speaking of stindies, Mike White arrived with his Paramount Vantage-backed directorial debut *Year of the Dog*, starring Molly Shannon as a pooch-lovin' secretary. "Because I'm here with a studio, things feel more cushy," admits White, who recalls nervously "vomiting in the snow" before the premiere of his first Sundance film, 2000's *Chuck & Buck*. More relaxed this year, White made time for some obscure stuff, like the well-received doc about storytelling, *Protagonist*. "There are still really cool movies...and real artists doing what they want. I dig it."

And then there are the winners, which include Jeffrey Blitz (*Spellbound*), director of the quirky *Rocket Science*; the gripping Mexican-immigrant drama *Padre Nuestro*; and Jess Weixler, who won a special jury prize for her turn in the daring vagina *dentata* horror flick *Teeth*. "I'm glad that people connected to a woman with teeth in her vagina!" she said as she accepted the award. Further proof that Sundance really does reward the boldly offbeat. ■ (Additional reporting by Neil Drumming, Gregory Kirschling, Chris Nashawaty, Whitney Pastorek, and Adam B. Vary)



John Cusack & Gracie Bednarczyk play father and daughter in the Dramatic Audience Award winner—and heartbreaker—'Grace Is Gone.'



My First Sundance

Rainn Wilson

"It's absolute madness!" declares *The Office*'s Dwight, who was in town for a little more than a day to plug his sci-fi kids' film *The Last Mimzy*, which casts him—perfectly—as an elementary school science teacher. Here are his impressions of 27 hours in Park City. —Gregory Kirschling

Swag "A woman came up to me and said, 'Oh, I'd like to gift you.' I didn't know *gift* was a verb, but apparently it is, and that's what people do: They gift each other here. So I got a Sonic toothbrush and a little photo frame and shoes. And a Timberland coat."

Celeb Sighting "I ran into Zoey Deschanel. I'm greatly enamored of her. I said hi, and she said [*makes a funny face*], 'Huhwah' and dashed off down the street. She doesn't know who I am. Which is cool."

Party Time "We had a nice dinner for *The Last Mimzy*—there were sing-alongs, weenie roasts. And then we went to two very loud, crowded parties, which is not my scene. I don't drink, I'm married, and music these days is too loud as I'm entering into my 40s. So I was probably home earlier than anyone at Sundance."

Morning in Park City "I got up, did my tai chi, and had my garlic and ginger bath." For real? "No, not for real. I was picked up at 8:15, and I've been doing press pretty much straight since, [although] I got a 15-minute break to eat some pizza."

The Verdict "I had no idea what a huge scene it was here. They say it's a huge scene, but until you experience it, it's kind of like Vietnam. You have to have been there to really know what it's like."

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Getting Naked With...

Diego Luna

The 'Y Tu Mamá También' star keeps his wits—and posse—about him at Sundance

"There's a lot of *blah, blah, blah* going on at a festival, and you can get lost in that," says the 27-year-old Mexican actor. Not that he doesn't enjoy a good party, but this year Luna found he'd rather hang out with the 10 friends and family members who accompanied him to Park City. In town for **THE NIGHT BUFFALO**, a Spanish-language thriller about tortured teens in which he appears stark naked more often than not, Luna counted on his entourage to have his back when he felt vulnerable.

"Sundance is the perfect place to present a film," says Luna, who also produced the still-seeking-U.S.-distribution *Buffalo*. "But when you're so exposed as we are in this film, you have to protect yourself." Luckily, in *Mister Lonely*, an upcoming movie from *Kids* screenwriter Harmony Korine, Luna will be more covered—albeit in sequins, dark glasses, and a single white glove. "I play an impersonator, a guy who doesn't want to be himself and prefers to be Michael Jackson—which," he adds, grinning, "is even *darker* than playing Michael Jackson. Imagine that." —Missy Schwartz



Queen Latifah: How I Nailed My Sundance Role

To play an HIV-positive woman in HBO's *Life Support*, which premiered at the fest, the glam Queen borrowed her beauty routine from the role's real-life inspiration: director Nelson George's sister, Andrea. "She's a regular girl. She doesn't wear a lot of makeup. She may wear some lip gloss, a little eyeliner. She *will* have her nails done. If she saw my nails right now she'd be screaming, 'Where are your acrylics?!'" —Whitney Pastorek

PAUL RUDD & DAVID WAIN RIFF ON SWAG

The star and director of *The Ten* joke about the fancy freebies they scored at Sundance.
—Chris Nashawaty



WAIN: They give away all this expensive stuff, but only if you're rich and famous. Paul was my ticket in.

RUDD: I was really happy because I have the most extravagant collection of facial creams and ointments at home. And they were giving away the finest creams.

WAIN: Paul also got a television set and a Corvette and some property in Nassau, right?

RUDD: Yes, I got a time-share in the Bahamas.

WAIN: When I told them I was the director of the film, they gave me a rubber band with a logo on it. That put me in my place.

Candid Sundance

The paparazzi were as omnipresent as the snow in Park City, but even they couldn't manage the stars'-eye view captured here. Armed with HP Photosmart R967 digital cameras, seven actors hit us with their best shots. —Lindsay Soll



DREA DE MATTEO & SHOOTER JENNINGS In town to promote *Broken English*, the actress got snap-happy late at night with her country-singer boyfriend: "We took about 150 of those!"



PARKER POSEY During lunch, de Matteo's *Broken English* costar "put sunglasses on and sat there, like, superserious," says the photog. "Then she started laughing and I got the picture."



ROCCO DISPIRITO & TARA REID Taking after his mom on TV's *The Restaurant*, the star chef "made the best meatballs ever" for a benefit dinner, says the *If I Had Known I Was a Genius* star.



PAUL RUDD "I took a lot of pics in the EW studio," says *The Ten*'s Rudd. Here, he poses with this shot of Naomi Watts from Sundance 2005, which made him feel "like King Kong."



DAMON DASH "I profess that no one can out-work me," says the hip-hop mogul and *Weapons* co-producer. "So when [my entourage] saw I fell asleep they were dancing and taking pictures."



CHRIS KLEIN & PATRICK FUGIT "Patrick and I were being interviewed by a Spanish-speaking outlet," explains the *Good Life* actor. "We were trying really hard to understand the question."



TRACEE ELLIS ROSS "That pizza was definitely my excitement of the trip!" laughs the *Life Support* actress (with BET reporter Touré). "I wanted to lick the man's face who made it!"



MICHAEL ANGARANO "I lost my gloves in the attempt to take this picture," says the *Snow Angels* actor. "I had to wear my little brother's that were three sizes too small the rest of the time."

What's on My Mind

GWYNETH PALTROW

At Sundance to promote *The Good Night*, the star says her long hiatus is over—though she'd love some advice from Hollywood's other working moms. BY GREGORY KIRSCHLING

HER BROTHER'S MOVIE

I asked, "Can I please be in [*The Good Night*]?" Jake kept resisting. He thought, "It's my first film, and I don't want it to be associated with you." Slowly he [realized], "My sister's a really good actress and if she wants to be in the film, I might as well."

HAVING IT ALL

I hadn't worked in a long time. I was

really committed to being home. Then I finally agreed to do this movie *Iron Man* [a comic-book adaptation with Robert Downey Jr.]. I reached a place where I thought, "It's okay that I have a passion for something besides my family." I love making films. If I do one thing that makes me fulfilled, then I'm a more interesting woman for my children.

PEERS OF INFLUENCE

I'm not going to work like I did before I had kids. [Paltrow and her husband, Coldplay frontman Chris Martin, have two children: Apple, 2, and Moses, 10 months.] I want to call Kate Winslet and say, "Can you tell me how to do this?" Or call Cate Blanchett and ask her to describe [her day] from 7 a.m. on, and tell me what to do, because I don't

know how to do this. But it's not going to be back-to-back films.

THOSE PESKY RAGS

You want to be an actor. You don't want to be in whatever tabloid. To me, those worlds seem mutually exclusive. And I fully understand that for whatever reason I'm one of those people where there's an interest, if you will, in my personal life. But I do

think people are kind of bored. I've got a couple kids, a husband, I've just been at home.

HER BEST-PIC PICK

I was really killed by *Babel*, I loved it so much. Especially the two women, Adriana Barraza and Rinko Kikuchi.

For more, including talk of the next Coldplay CD, log on to ew.com/gwyneth.





*Music! Movies! Gift-wrapped
manhoods! On the eve of
the Grammys, EW gets
serious and silly with
Justin Timberlake,
the boy-band grad-
uate who has
turned out to
be the real
deal.*

SEXY BEA

BY
CLARK
COLLIS
*Photograph by
Martin Schoeller*







Justin Timberlake's cheek is glistening with another man's perspiration. And he couldn't be happier about it.

"There's nothing like some Will Forte sweat on your face!" laughs the 26-year-old singer, who is lying under the comedian on a couch at *Saturday Night Live's* New York studio this December afternoon. With Maya Rudolph, the pair have been blocking out a sketch called "Old Friends," which concludes with Timberlake and Forte shot by a sniper. Hence their prone position on the couch, and the sketch-comedian perspiration dripping onto pop-superstar face.

"People would pay a lot of money for that sweat," Forte faux-boasts to Timberlake.

"You should sell it on eBay," Rudolph concurs.

She's joking. Clearly, the only sweat worth its Internet-auction salt around here belongs to Justin

Timberlake, this week's *SNL* host and musical guest. For this is Timberlake's time. He seems omnipresent in the culture, his celebrity status comfortably eclipsing even the megastardom he enjoyed at the height of 'N Sync's success. He's at Sundance with a new movie. He imitates Prince at the Golden Globes. And then, of course, he's the story du jour for the tabloid press and entertainment news shows, which have drooled endlessly over Timberlake's split with longtime girlfriend Cameron Diaz and his subsequent rumored "links" to a tranche of comely female celebrities including Scarlett Johansson and Jessica Biel.

But all this—the breakup, the alleged flirting, the awards ceremony high jinks—is merely the sideshow to his emergence as a genuine pop culture talent, the one real deal to survive the boy-band craze. On his second solo CD, last year's *FutureSex/LoveSounds*, Timberlake went for a whole new sound, a sonic departure from both 'N Sync and his first solo album, *Justified*. The result was massive success: two No. 1 singles so far; the introduction of the phrase "bringing sexy back" to the idiom; four Grammy nominations, including a coveted Album of the Year nod; and the fifth-best-selling album of 2006, shifting

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”

2.4 million copies. While releases by OutKast, Pink, and Diddy underperformed sales-wise, Timberlake proved himself a rare beast—an established artist whose new release matched the commercial hopes of a music business in dire need of superstars.

“He is hugely important to the industry,” says Barry Weiss, president and CEO of Jive Records, who has known Timberlake for nearly a decade. “In the past three to five years it’s become more and more difficult for American artists to sell overseas. He’s one of the few that successfully sells in every country around the world.”

As if all that weren’t enough, 2007 will also see the proper debut of “Justin Timberlake, Actor,” with at least three films boasting his thespian talents: *Black Snake Moan* (which opens Feb. 23), *Shrek the Third* (out May 18), and the Nick Cassavetes-directed *Alpha Dog*. The latter was released on Jan. 12 and garnered Timberlake a slew of positive reviews.

“If he wasn’t so good, the movie would fall flat on its face,” says Cassavetes. “You know, this kid’s going to be the biggest star that ever hit anywhere.”

And right now, it seems he can do no wrong. While the “Old Friends” sketch was cut from *SNL* before broadcast, the onetime Mouseketeer still managed

to create a singular pop culture moment on the show. “D--- in a Box,” a spoof R&B music video in which Timberlake and *SNL* writer-performer Andy Samberg croon about their gift-wrapped manhoods, has become an Internet sensation, exceeding even the spectacular success of Samberg’s previous “Lazy Sunday.” The video, whose song Timberlake helped compose, is sharply satirical—but it’s also sophomoric enough to serve as a reminder that, despite being a showbiz veteran, the “SexyBack” star is still four years away from celebrating his 30th birthday.

“He was born to do *SNL*,” Samberg says. “He’s got charm and acting ability, but he also has comic timing. And then, when you start throwing singing into the mix, it’s like, Oh man, you can make the dumbest joke sound great! And he has no problem looking like an ass. None whatsoever.”

“I liked him a lot,” Samberg concludes. “He’s a silly man.”

The preteen Justin Timberlake, whose parents split when he was just a toddler, was anything but silly. “I was a tortured young dude—to the point of rage,” he says between mouthfuls of chicken paillard at Manhattan eatery Pastis. “I literally walked around like this...” Timberlake stares down at his plate, the star’s face scrunching up into a dark glower before reconfiguring back to its usual friendly, open demeanor. “My mom makes jokes. She goes, ‘It’s no shock to me you’re obsessed with sneakers because that’s the only thing you looked at for the first 10 years of your life.’ And if I couldn’t do something really well when I was a kid, I wouldn’t do it at all. I wanted everything to be perfect.”

That drive carried over to the emergence of ‘N Sync. “I had so much power,” Timberlake remembers. “We were playing stadiums, and I could say, ‘Hey, we should fly down!’ And suddenly people are building rigs for us to fly down on. We had a blast doing it, [but] I was really a perfectionist.”

But by the time he went solo to record *Justified*, the committed perfectionist seemed like he couldn’t quite hold it together. In fact, he had become a bit of a stoner. Timberlake has previously admitted that *Justified* was constructed in something of a marijuana haze. That partly explains, Timberlake says, his somewhat bewildered 2003 appearance on Ashton Kutcher’s MTV prank show, *Punk’d*. Timberlake, who was tricked into believing that his possessions were being taken away by the tax authorities, seemed totally devastated—for a minute there, he was known as The Man Ashton Kutcher Almost Made Cry.

“I’ll give you a little hint on that *Punk’d* thing,” Timberlake says. “That was back in my first-album creative days. That’s why I looked the way I did, if that makes any sense to you.”

Can I confirm what you’re saying here?

“I don’t give a s---.”

Were you stoned?

“Incredibly,” he laughs. “Yeah, that was a trippy

BIG-SCREEN PLAYER

In his own words, Timberlake talks about his four film projects



ALPHA DOG (Now playing)

“I only had one scene with him, but Harry Dean Stanton is the biggest rock star on the planet to me. He’s one of those people who you look at and think, Man, what were you like at my age?”



BLACK SNAKE MOAN

(Feb. 23) “A film where you come in and point a gun at Sam Jackson’s head and have him talk you down? I’ll sign up for that!”



SHREK THE THIRD

(May 18) “I just recorded for, like, three hours yesterday. You have no idea what you’re doing. You get the overall gist of each scene, then you go in and read each line 20,000 times. But they showed me some [of it]. It’s so cool.”



SOUTHLAND TALES

(Unscheduled) “I have no idea what that movie’s about. No, I have an idea what that movie’s about. It’s a black comedy about the apocalypse in 2008. That’s what it is!”



(From top) Timberlake performs with Timbaland in Denmark; works a London crowd; struts his stuff at the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show; and gets punk'd

experience. That was why I was completely glassy-eyed.... As a matter of fact, I was like, Okay, I got to stop doing this.... I don't do that anymore."

Justified sold over 3 million copies. Yet, despite having such credible producers as the Neptunes and Timbaland, it failed to inspire the critical plaudits that Timberlake then craved.

"I was like, Yes, now I get to be like an Al Green!" says the singer of his solo debut. "Then the reviews came out: 'Pop album,' 'Pop album,' 'Pop album.' I couldn't f---ing believe it.... But it's just the nature of the world. At some point you have to realize you can't keep beating people over the head: I sing R&B, I sing R&B! Then you just become weird."

The critical reaction sparked an epiphany. Timberlake realized there were things he could control and things he couldn't. "And the ones that you can't control, you have to say, F--- it," he explains. "And enjoy it!... So I was like, F--- it! If I'm a pop artist, then I don't just have to do R&B. That's why this [new] album sounds the way it does."

Mostly co-produced by Timberlake with Timbaland, *FutureSex/LoveSounds* is short on traditional vocal hooks and long on thundering electronica-styled beats. Songs such as the title track and "SexyBack" barely sound like Justin Timberlake songs at all. The latter was such a departure, in fact, that Jive boss Barry Weiss more or less admits he had doubts when Timberlake suggested that it be released as the album's lead single. "It was an unusual record," defends the label chief. "It didn't sound like Justin vocally. It didn't have his distinctive falsetto-style vocals. It was a bit of a risk for all of us. But it was a risk that clearly paid off."

Paid off? In spades. On top of the 2 million-plus copies *FutureSex/LoveSounds* has sold in the U.S., it has shifted an almost equal number abroad. The CD also ended up on a lot of best-of-2006 lists, including this magazine's. But with Timberlake front and center in the public eye, a certain inevitable carping followed: Some critics wondered just who this young punk thought he was to be "bringing sexy back."

"Well, who the f--- is anyone?" Timberlake asks. "The thing I love about it is, at this point, people don't project it onto me. People don't come up to me and say, 'Hey, man, you're bringing sexy back.' They go, *I'm bringing sexy back*. But, yeah, obviously that's being pushed by the media—no offense. 'F---ing pretentious kid makes a statement.' They still love to call me a kid."

Indeed, when it comes to his private

life, Timberlake's newfound Zen has its limits. He declines to discuss his breakup with Cameron Diaz, or any of the supposed liaisons that followed the relationship's demise. He is, on the other hand, happy to discuss his strategy for dealing with tabloid coverage of his life: Avoid it. "You sort of know it exists because, the more promotion you do, the more you hear about it," he says. "But if I wasn't doing all this promotion I wouldn't even know about it. I'd be surfing or snowboarding or playing golf. That's how I keep my sanity. You cannot do this without a sense of humor. Otherwise you get caught pleasuring yourself in a bathroom stall."

But surely it's irritating to have had this tabloid tracking of your private life over the past month?

"Like I said, I just choose not to participate," he sighs. "That's what gets me by."

When was the last time the coverage caused him to lose his temper? The singer pauses: "It depends what you classify as losing your temper." Then, after a long silence, he offers this story: "I was at the Grammy nominations and somebody asked me a question. It was like, Do you have any advice, you know, for someone in particular. [Though Timberlake doesn't specify, the "someone" is most likely his former girlfriend Britney Spears.] I looked at the interviewer and I said, 'I don't think so.' I walked off, and I was like, 'F---!' My manager [said], 'Let it roll off your shoulders.' And I was like, 'You're right.' But what is the point of all that? What does that have to do with anything?"

"You know," says 'Alpha Dog' director Nick Cassavetes, "this kid's going to be the biggest star that ever hit anywhere."



There is little doubt that Timberlake's biggest box office film of 2007 will be *Shrek the Third*, in which he voices Artie, a.k.a. the young King Arthur. And the singer wants to make clear that he secured the role without the help of the Princess Fiona-voicing Cameron Diaz. Rather, he says he was cast by Jeffrey Katzenberg after the DreamWorks cofounder saw him host *SNL* for the first time in October 2003.

"He said he saw me on *SNL* and was like, 'That guy is funny,'" recalls Timberlake. "He has to play Artie.' I didn't bring it up with Cameron for a while. It felt weird. Like, 'Hey, guess what?..."

But the big-budget *Shrek the Third* is something of a blip in Timberlake's nascent filmography. While he did perform in a straight-to-video thriller (2006's *Edison Force*, with Morgan Freeman and Kevin Spacey), Timberlake really wants to cut his acting teeth on indie projects. *Alpha Dog* tracks the ultimately homicidal ac-

(PAGES 32-33) STYLING: ANNIE PRATT/AS/REFUGIA PHOTO: GROOMING: AMY VERBECK/CO-BRINS MENUS: JEFFREY KATZENBERG ARTISTS: SHIRT: VYSS SAINT LAURENT TUXEDO: J. LINDBERGH (PAGES 34-35) TIMBERLAKE: DAVE HOGAN/GETTY IMAGES ALPHA DOG: DARRIN MICHELIS BLACK SHIRT: MIZON BRIDGE TALKIN: SPHER THE THIRD: DREAMWORKS ANIMATION SKG

tivities of some privileged L.A. gangsta-wannabe kids. Debuting at the Sundance Film Festival, *Black Snake Moan* features the singer as a military recruit whose nymphomaniac girlfriend, a scantily clad Christina Ricci, is chained to a radiator by Samuel L. Jackson's Southern farmer after we see her developing uncontrollable sexual urges following Timberlake's departure. And he has also shot a part in *Southland Tales*, a new project from Richard Kelly, the director of cult hit *Donnie Darko*. None of these movies is destined to dominate the multiplexes of the heartland.

"That's comfortable for me," he says. "There's enough pressure on me to succeed at the music box office. I'd just rather get better at this. It's a work of love. I'm really into it and I want to do so much more."

How far can he take his acting career? At Sundance, Timberlake was greeted with serious applause at a Q&A after *Black Snake Moan* screened. *Alpha Dog* received mixed reviews, but the singer himself was widely praised (the *Los Angeles Times* hailed his performance as the film's "most nuanced," while EW's own Lisa Schwarzbaum described him as "charming").

"That was cool," he says of the *Black Snake Moan* screening at Sundance, the first time he had seen a proper print of the film. "I love the movie. I want to be involved in things that are inspiring to me. I guess I just have to trust my taste barometer."

Of course, Hollywood's dustbin of history overflows with music stars who tried, and failed, to make it in Tinseltown. Moreover, the singer's features are handsome enough to preclude him from many character roles, and perhaps too soft to scream "movie idol." But similar things were once said of Will Smith, and *Black Snake Moan* director Craig Brewer has no problem comparing the two.

"Little by little, [Will Smith] made choices that edged him closer to being a better artist," says Brewer. "And Justin is on that road. He could probably go the *Glitter* route. [But] that's not what he's chosen to do.... He's choosing roles that push him outside the comfort zone. That is a sign of someone who is going to have a career that is going to last decades." Samuel L. Jackson is equally effusive in his praise: "He went for it every time," says the veteran actor of his costar. "In fact, there was one point where I said, 'Wow, he's gonna run out of tears in a minute.'"

"Hey, have we paid the check?" asks a clearly concerned Timberlake after our post-meal coffees have been cleared away. Dinner with the star is nearly over, which is a shame. He is remarkably good company: bright, funny, informed, and voluble on almost any subject that does not clash with this Southern gent's aversion to kissing-and-telling. His reticence even applies when the kissing happens to be on screen. Asked what it was like to film *Black Snake Moan*'s opening raunchy sex scene with Ricci, he protests that he's "not gonna answer those ques-



Samberg (left) with Timberlake on SNL

PRIVATES JOKE

In December 2005, 'Saturday Night Live' player Andy Samberg created an Internet phenomenon with his Narnia-and-cupcakes short film, "Lazy Sunday." A year later, he repeated the 'SNL' trick by putting Justin Timberlake's you-know-what in a box. Here, Samberg and Timberlake reveal how they did it.

SAMBERG "We wanted to do an early-'90s R&B song. I think it was Jorma [Taccone, one of Samberg's writing partners] who said, 'What about giving a gift where you take off the top and your d--- is through a hole?' I came up with an idea of the melody. Once we started recording, Justin took the reins and schooled us and made it a much better song. The dude is a hitmaker; that's what he does. Color Me Badd has been brought up more [as an inspiration] because we're white. But we were drawing a lot on Jodeci and R. Kelly."

TIMBERLAKE "I remember Andy on set saying, 'No, we need bigger boxes.' [Laughs] Actually, we had trouble shooting it; there were so many takes where we cracked up. I knew it would be well received on the show, but I never expected it to be this phenomenon. I kept saying to Andy that this was going to be bigger than 'Lazy Sunday.' He was like, 'Well, don't jinx it.'"

SAMBERG "'Lazy Sunday' was watched over 5 million times [before NBC pulled it from YouTube]. This one was able to take off even more because NBC posted it themselves on YouTube." (The "D--- in a Box" clip is currently nearing the 12.6 million-view mark.)

tions.... Christina is hot, by the way. But, you know..."

He is also, obviously, someone who believes in doing the right thing. And right now, that means disappearing to hunt down our waitress and ensure that the check *has* been taken care of, despite the 99.9 percent chance that his publicist would have already done so.

When Timberlake reappears, he has a big smile on his face. "You missed something there, dude," he says. "I was at the bar and this girl said to me, 'Hey, I'm bringing sexy back.' And you missed it! You're a terrible journalist."

"I'm joking," Timberlake laughs. "I'm just breaking your balls..."

And the silly man disappears into the Manhattan night. Laughing. ■ (Additional reporting by Neil Drumming)

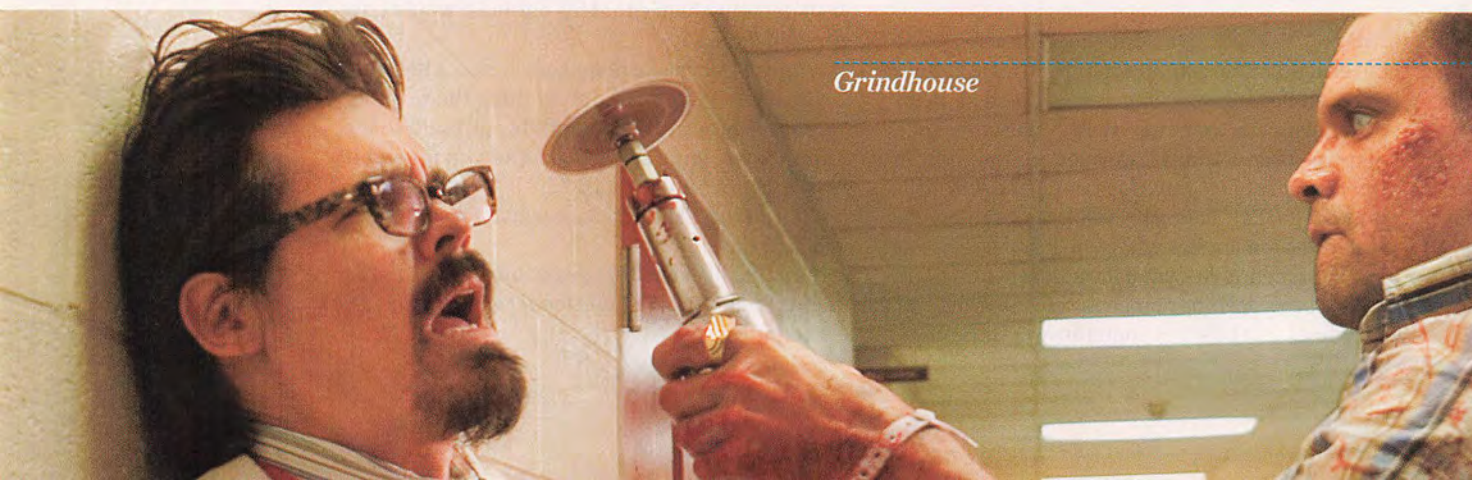
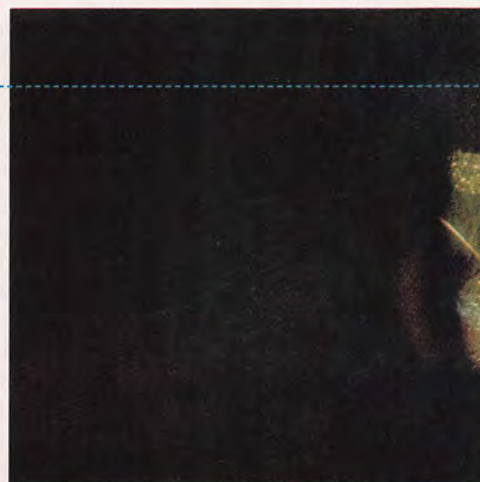
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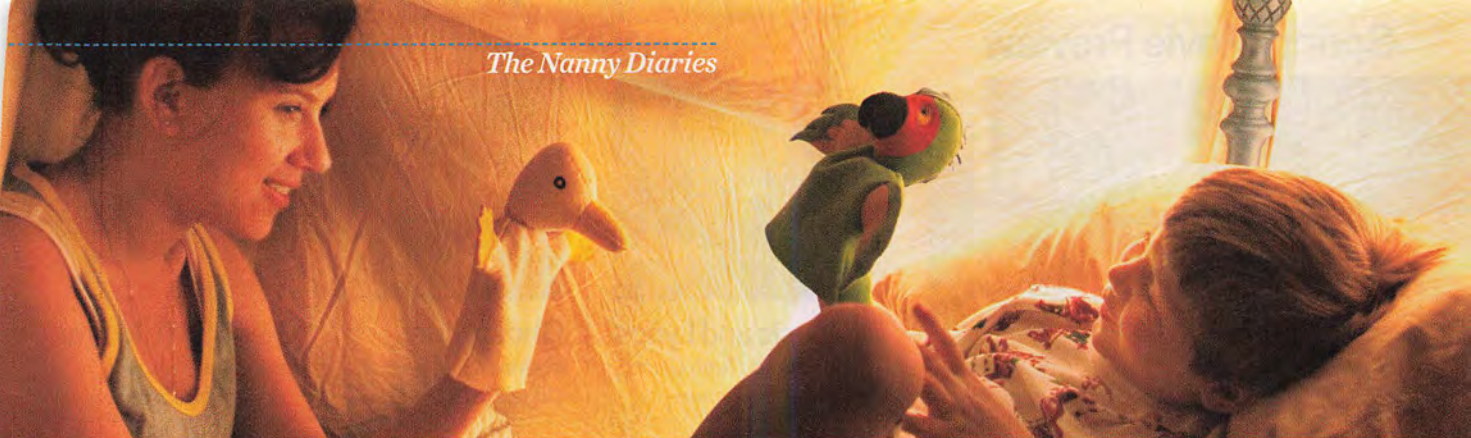
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Movie Preview

Enough of the Oscar movies! Enough of those brilliant dramas and all that really good acting! It's time now for fun, guns, and bad behavior. One spring, coming up.



Grindhouse



The Nanny Diaries



Fling

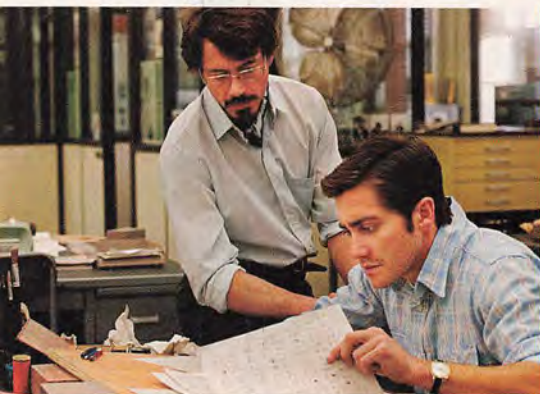


Zodiac



Traditionally, spring is a time of renewal, when vestiges of the old year fall away and the world seems full of potential. Unless, of course, you like movies. The season is no longer packed solely with the studios' misfits and rejects, but, let's face it, it's still kinda summer's ugly cousin. Fortunately, hope springs eternal. What follows are 15 films we're actually sort of excited about: some for their promise of intense drama (*Zodiac*, *The Kingdom*), others for their promise of giggles (*Blades of Glory*, *Hot Fuzz*). Here's hoping that we don't get fooled again.

Spring Movie Preview



Zodiac

STARRING Jake Gyllenhaal, Robert Downey Jr., Mark Ruffalo

 In his first movie since 2002's *Panic Room*, maestro of the mind-bender David Fincher tackles the story of San Francisco's most infamous serial killer. Trying to unravel the twisty trail of torture are Gyllenhaal as a cartoonist obsessed with the case, Downey as a strung-out *San Francisco Chronicle* reporter, and Ruffalo as a cool-as-ice cop. And maybe, if you've been good, there will be more heads in boxes. (March 2)



Black Snake Moan

STARRING Samuel L. Jackson, Christina Ricci

 For his *Hustle & Flow* follow-up, writer-director Craig Brewer tells the story of a broken bluesman (Jackson) who reforms a promiscuous girl (Ricci) through unorthodox methods. Like chaining her up. Tales of redemption don't excite you? Well, *Moan* also has a blistering blues soundtrack. (Feb. 23)



300

STARRING Gerard Butler, Rodrigo Santoro

 If you think "the Hot Gates" is the Microsoft honcho's MySpace handle, check your history: It's Thermopylae, where 300 Spartan soldiers took on the massive Persian army in 480 B.C. Adapted by Zack Snyder from Frank Miller's gruesome graphic novel, the CG-heavy, hard-R flick will send viscera flying in cool new ways. (March 9)



Music and Lyrics

STARRING Hugh Grant, Drew Barrymore

 For reasons only a Hollywood movie can explain, an unapologetically callow '80s pop has-been (Hugh Grant) teams up with a ditzzy plant-waterer (Drew Barrymore) to write a song for a serene, Buddhism-obsessed pop starlet who writhes around like Shakira. They have only a matter of a days to come up with a hit, fall in love, or both. (Feb. 14)



Ghost Rider

STARRING Nicolas Cage, Eva Mendes

 It's a bit of a kick when Oscar winners star in movies no Oscar winner should be seen in. So the prospect of watching Nicolas Cage light his head on fire to play Johnny Blaze, a stuntman who becomes the fiery, crime-fighting spirit of vengeance, sounds kinda fun. Let's hope the filmmakers didn't take the comic-book pulp too seriously. (Feb. 16)



Reno 911!: Miami

STARRING Thomas Lennon, Robert Ben Garant

 Lieut. Dangle (co-writer Thomas Lennon) and his team of hapless cops take it to the streets of Miami for a law enforcement convention in this adaptation of the Comedy Central series. Audiences can expect exploding whales, viral outbreaks, and officer Trudy Wiegel (Kerri Kenney-Silver) on patrol wearing a scoliosis bra. (Feb. 23)



I Think I Love My Wife

STARRING Chris Rock, Kerry Washington

 Granted, Rock's first effort as a writer-director, 2003's *Head of State*, didn't have viewers humming "Hail to the Chief." But with this relationship comedy—about a married suburbanite (Rock) who gets the seven-year itch—the comic will unleash his wit on a reliably funny stand-up target: the leg-iron-like bonds of matrimony. (March 16)

Pride

STARRING Terrence Howard, Bernie Mac, Kimberly Elise

 First came Rocky Balboa. Then, *Invincible*'s Vince Papale. Make way for Philly's newest long shot. Oscar nominee Howard plays Jim Ellis, who, with the help of a graying janitor (Bernie Mac) and a group of troubled teens, founded the City of Brotherly Love's first African-American swim team in the mid-1970s. We love the smell of chlorine in the morning...smells like victory! (March 23)





Reign Over Me

STARRING Adam

Sandler, Don Cheadle, Liv Tyler



Good grief. It's Mike Binder's secret weapon. The writer-director of 2005's *The Upside of Anger* offers us Adam Sandler (in full-on serious mode) as a man emotionally incapacitated by the loss of his family in the attacks of Sept. 11. Don Cheadle plays the rediscovered college buddy who prods him to reengage in life. (March 23)



Meet the Robinsons

STARRING THE VOICES OF

Angela Bassett, Tom Selleck, Adam West



Greenlit by the old guard at Disney animation, this dysfunctional-family odyssey about a kid inventor got retooled after Pixar's John Lasseter took over. Can Disney make an in-house CG flick better than 2005's *Chicken Little*? Shouldn't be hard. And it's in 3-D, which is always a plus. (March 30)



Blades of Glory

STARRING Will Ferrell, Jon Heder, Will Arnett



Will Ferrell. Competitive figure skating. A silly, frilly Lord of the Dance costume. What else do you really need to know? The plot? Okay, fine: Two rival Olympic figure skaters (Ferrell and Heder) who have been barred from competition find a loophole that allows them to take to the ice again—but only if they're partners. Oh, pas de deux it to us one more time... (March 30)



Grindhouse

STARRING Kurt Russell, Rose McGowan



For males of a certain age, this is the must-see film of the spring. B-movie geeks Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino pool their drool for a double feature: Rodriguez's *Planet Terror* is a zombie flick, while Tarantino's *Death Proof* stars Russell as a homicidal stunt driver. Admit it, you're either repulsed or already dialing 777-FILM. (April 6)



Hot Fuzz

STARRING Simon Pegg, Nick Frost



Simon Pegg + dead people = good times. In the 2004 horror comedy *Shaun of the Dead*, Pegg took on an army of zombies. Here, reunited with that film's creative team, he plays a hard-charging London cop who gets reassigned to a sleepy English village that seems devoid of crime—until bodies begin popping up. Gun-based hilarity ensues. (April 13)



The Kingdom

STARRING Jamie Foxx, Jennifer Garner



Who bombed an American housing compound in Saudi Arabia? As an FBI investigator in director Peter Berg's thriller, Foxx hunts for answers. Oscar winner Chris Cooper plays an explosives whiz, Garner a forensics expert, and Jeremy Piven ditches his *Entourage* to strut as a diplomat. (April 20)



The Nanny Diaries

STARRING Scarlett Johansson, Paul Giamatti, Laura Linney



The directors of the splendid *American Splendor* explore the wilds of Manhattan's moneyed Upper East Side in their adaptation of the satiric best-selling novel. Johansson is a college grad who cares for a spoiled tot, falls for a privileged hunk, and tries to figure out why rich people are so mean. (April 20)

Spring Cha-Ching

Just enough spring movies have soared to give studios hope.

2002

My Big Fat Greek Wedding

A \$5 mil budget. You paying attention, Mr. Bruckheimer? Domestic box office: \$241,438,181

Panic Room

Jodie Foster, Supermom: Part 1. \$95,308,367

2003

Anger Management

Jack and Adam try hugging it out. \$134,318,650

Daredevil

Come on, 'fess up. Who paid to see Affleck in tights? \$102,543,518

2004

The Passion of the Christ

Blood and subtitles. A new recipe for a blockbuster. \$370,274,604

Mean Girls

Naive Lindsay, come back to us! \$86,058,055

2005

Hitch

Will Smith kills in yet another genre: romantic comedy. \$177,784,257

2006

Ice Age: The Meltdown

Never underestimate bored families. \$195,330,621

Scary Movie 4

Seriously. We're embarrassed for you. \$90,710,620

More, More, More



Bridge to Terabithia's AnnaSophia Robb and Josh Hutcherson

Tyler Perry's Daddy's Little Girls

STARRING Gabrielle Union

A cute lawyer and a cute janitor meet cute. 2/14

Breach

STARRING Chris Cooper, Ryan Phillippe

An FBI newbie must rat out his boss. 2/16

Bridge to Terabithia

STARRING Zoëy Deschanel

An imaginary paradise turns tragic. 2/16

The Astronaut Farmer

STARRING Billy Bob Thornton

A wannabe astronaut builds a homemade rocket. 2/23

The Number 23

STARRING Jim Carrey

A man is haunted by a numeral. 2/23

Wild Hogs

STARRING Tim Allen

The open road tempts four middle-aged pals. 3/2

Black Book

STARRING Carice van Houten

Paul Verhoeven (*Basic Instinct*) does WWII. 3/9

The Namesake

STARRING Kal Penn

Kumar gets serious in this lit adaptation. 3/9

Premonition

STARRING Sandra Bullock, Julian McMahon

A housewife can't get rid of her dead hubby. 3/16

Shooter

STARRING Mark Wahlberg

Never double-cross a Marine Corps sniper. 3/16

The Wind That Shakes the Barley

STARRING Cillian Murphy

Fighting the Irish Civil War. 3/16

Dead Silence

STARRING Amber Valletta

You had us at tongue-less corpses. 3/23

The Hills Have Eyes 2

STARRING Michael McMillan

Mutants attack pretty people, Part 2. 3/23

Are We Done Yet?

STARRING Ice Cube

Homeowner hijinks. 4/6



Perfect Stranger's Willis and Berry

The Hoax

STARRING Richard Gere, Hope Davis

A con artist fakes a bio of Howard Hughes. True story. 4/6

Penelope

STARRING Christina Ricci, James McAvoy

A pig-snouted gal finds the beauty within. 4/6

The TV Set

STARRING David Duchovny, Judy Greer

An insider-y comedy about the making of a TV pilot. 4/6

Disturbia

STARRING Shia LaBeouf

Think *Rear Window* for gore-happy teens. 4/13



Premonition's Bullock

Perfect Stranger

STARRING Bruce Willis, Halle Berry

Berry's reporter gets all "To Catch a Predator." 4/13

Pathfinder

STARRING Karl Urban

A Viking lad is caught between clans. 4/20

In the Land of Women

STARRING Meg Ryan

A mom takes in a depressed Adam Brody. 4/20



Fracture's Gosling

Fracture

STARRING Anthony Hopkins, Ryan Gosling

A DA sets out to take down a murderer. 4/27

Jindabyne

STARRING Laura Linney, Gabriel Byrne

An unreported crime disrupts a family. 4/27

The Last Legion

STARRING Colin Firth

The bloody toga film that's not 300. 4/27

Sunshine

STARRING Michelle Yeoh, Cillian Murphy

A Danny Boyle movie about what happens to astronauts when the sun goes out. TBD

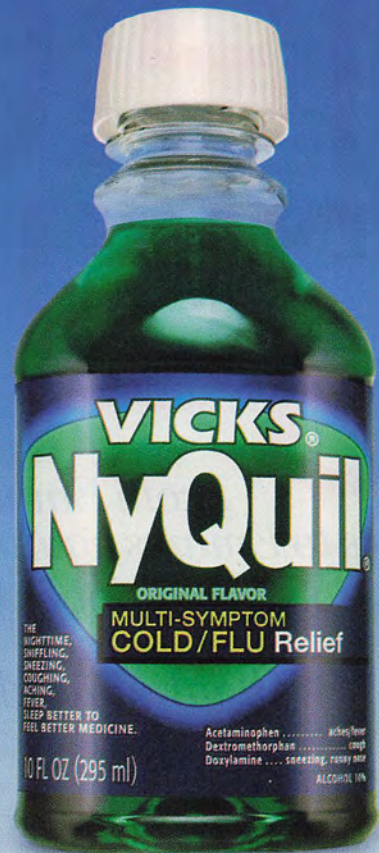
Spring Movie Preview

Written and reported by Marc Bernardin, Steve Daly, Neil Drumming, Michelle Kung, Jeff Labrecque, Chris Nashawaty, Josh Rottenberg, Missy Schwartz, Nick Spagnoli, and Tim Stack

What good is 4-hour relief if you're trying to sleep for 8?



4
hours
of cough relief



up to
8
hours
of cough relief

Don't be fooled by "nighttime" cold medicines with cough relief that lasts only 4 hours.

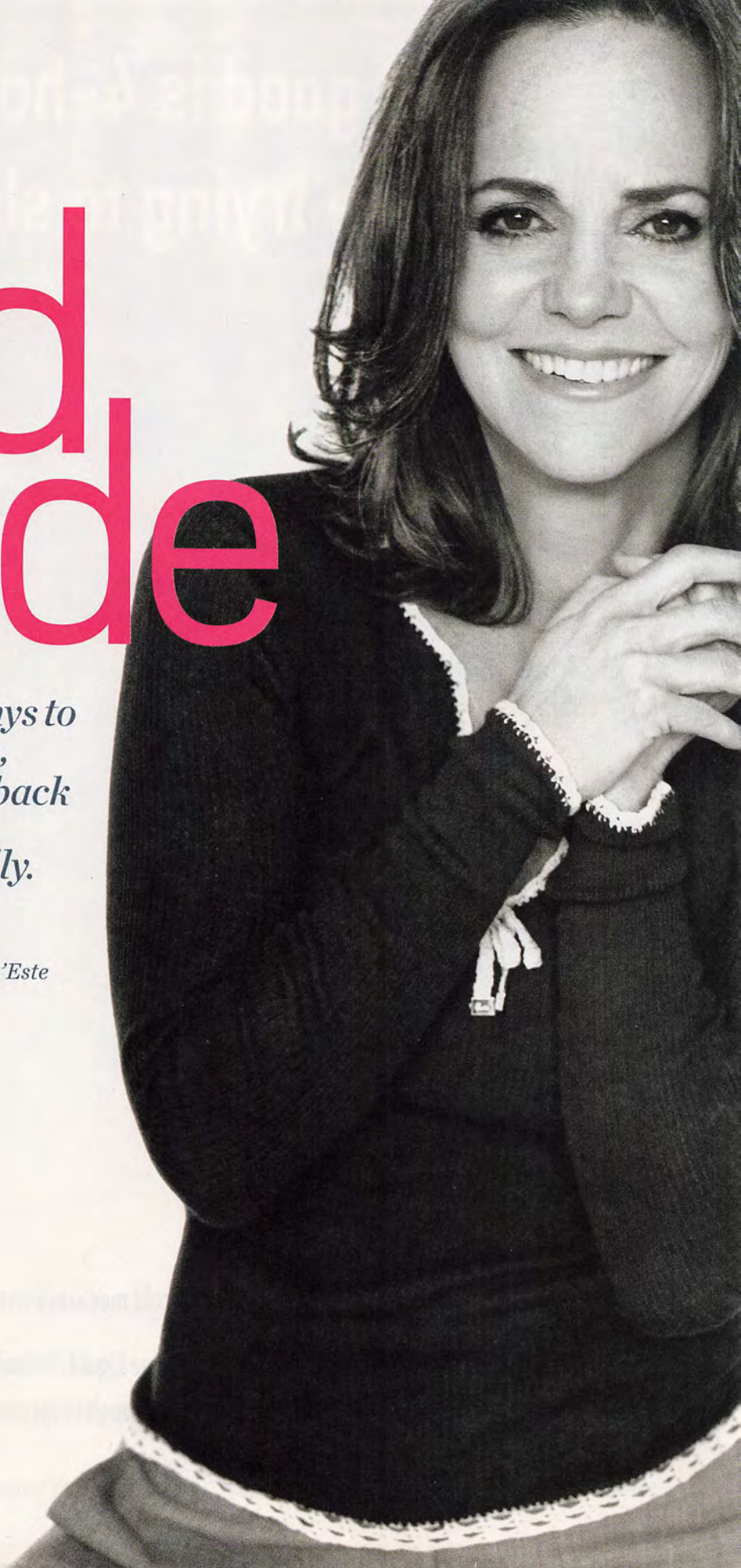
Unlike Tylenol Cold Multi-Symptom Nighttime Liquid, **NyQuil Multi-Symptom Cold/Flu Relief** has the maximum amount of its cough suppressant so you can get the sleep you need.

a field guide

*From Emmys to
Oscars to Emmys again,
Sally Field looks back
at a career that took
flight—literally.*

By Lynette Rice

Photograph by Roberto D'Este





Forty years ago, Field's résumé consisted merely of zany TV roles such as smiling teen surfer (*Gidget*) and airborne woman of the cloth (*The Flying Nun*). Making the transition from small to silver screen seemed about as realistic as...well, a flying nun. "As far as film is concerned, situation comedy was nonsense," says Field, now 60. "It was like you were illegitimate. You were never going to cross that barrier for as long as you lived." Field, however, broke through: Her Emmy-winning portrayal of a troubled woman in the TV miniseries *Sybil* led to 1979's *Norma Rae*, a role which scored her an Academy Award for Best Actress. A second Oscar followed (for *Places in the Heart*), along with a string of box office successes such as *Steel Magnolias*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, and *Forrest Gump*. In another time, that would have been a suitable coda for her career, but as the quality of television dramas has improved, many film actors—Glenn Close and Forest Whitaker, to name a couple—are bouncing freely between the mediums. No one has done it more successfully than Field, who in 2000 returned to TV with an Emmy-award-winning stint on *ER*. Now, with another possible Emmy nomination for her role as Nora Walker, a passive-aggressive widow with five adult children on ABC's *Brothers & Sisters* (Sundays at 10 p.m.), Field looks back at an extraordinary career filled with good fortune and a few bad breaks.

Gidget 1965–1966

Field, then 17, had just graduated from Birmingham High School in Van Nuys, Calif., when she landed the role of perky teen surfer Frances Gidget Lawrence in ABC's TV adaptation of the popular movie franchise. "I was standing on a street corner in Hollywood waiting for my brother to pick me up from an acting workshop when the casting director for Screen Gems came by and asked me if I wanted to come on an interview the next day. So I went into this room with all these professional actresses. I just felt short, round, and too flat, but I also knew that I was the star of the drama club at Birmingham High. The only time I started to feel there was some reaction to the show was when we went on an 18-city press tour. I remember how a mob of girls attacked me and tried to grab my hair, so a security guard picked me up, put me over his head, and then threw me in a broom closet. I just sat there going, *Okay, you're no longer in Kansas*. I started to feel it was the beginning of being a celebrity; the sort of love-hate of them wanting to touch you, yet also wanting to tear your eyes out."

The Flying Nun 1967–1970

ABC canceled '*Gidget*' after one season. But after the comedy became a hit during summer repeats, the network enlisted Field to play the exuberant Sister Bertrille, a nun whose wing-shaped corset—when coupled with strong winds—granted her the power of flight.

"I hated it. I didn't want to do it, but my stepfather said if I turned it down I may never work again. There were parts of the show that were really cute, and I loved being with my 'sisters' on the series, but I was monstrously bored. *Gidget*, at least, had human problems; there was nothing real about *The Flying Nun*. The only thing worth loving was that she could fly. Bless her ever-loving, f---ing heart that she could fly! In the midst of the '60s, when the war was happening and people were taking their clothes off, dropping acid, and changing culture in a big way, she was just out there, flying around."

Sybil 1976

Although Field was convincing as a young sexpot in the otherwise forgettable '*Stay Hungry*,' producers were skeptical that she could reinvent herself to play a tortured grad student with multiple personalities in this ABC miniseries, especially when Vanessa Redgrave was also up for the role.

"I came in to audition as *Sybil*, quiet and dumpy. I didn't look anybody in the eye, and if anybody talked to me, I'd act terribly frightened, like I was in some sort of deep emotional trouble. The role was exhausting for all the best reasons, and the reaction was simply astonishing. People were literally pulling their cars over when I was walking down the street. I was frightened at first, just like I was with those young girls who wanted to touch me and tear my hair out. But these people had tears in their eyes, thanking me." →



9



10

"We did a lot of screenings of that movie, and around the time when [Roberts' character is buried]—either during or right after it—someone would always pass out because they were trying not to cry. It was usually a man. Women were not afraid to just go boo-hoo! But the men would hold it in and pass out. We had to have a health-care provider on call at every screening, and at almost every single one, there'd be people rushing down the aisle. It was bizarre."

Forrest Gump 1994

Lured to the project by the kindness of its star and the ability to bring young Sam to the set, Field agreed to play Mama Gump for next to nothing.

"I was shooting *Mrs. Doubtfire* at the time, and Tom Hanks called and said, 'I have something for you to do, but hold on: You play my mother. And we don't have any money.' It was very rough going, but I was being a good friend. I was like, 'Don't worry about me. I'll even put my little bit of money back into it!' Being the complete stooge that I was."

The Court 2002

After Field appeared on 'ER' the previous season as Maura Tierney's mentally unstable mother, she teamed up with the medical show's exec producer John Wells to star in his new ABC drama about the U.S. Supreme Court.

"This came after the [Supreme Court's role in the] 2000 presidential election and I was outraged. I loved the idea of doing a show that would bring more information to people about our judicial system, but it was yanked off the air after three weeks. They were having a massive shake-up at ABC, *The Court* was a hugely expensive show, and I think they just didn't care. We found out it was canceled by watching *Entertainment Tonight*. It was handled terribly, especially since we just had a call from then entertainment president Susan Lyne, who said, 'Ooh, I'm loving it, loving everything.'"

Brothers & Sisters 2006–present

ABC had already shot the pilot and picked up the freshman family drama for 13 episodes when the network tapped Field to replace Betty Buckley as matriarch Nora Walker.

"Everybody was on board already, so I could see the cast. I went, *Wow*—it was hard to walk away from that. Then they asked if ABC Entertainment president Steve McPherson could call me. I said no because of the way *The Court* was handled but that he could e-mail me. He sent me the loveliest e-mail about how they're a different group, and I have loved what ABC has done to turn themselves around. It was flattering and really kind of great, and I still have it on my bulletin board. It felt like if ABC would end up canceling us overnight, at least someone would call me this time." ■

I truly didn't know that I was going to win, and felt it was bad luck to plan anything, so when I won, I said to myself, *Own this one! You gave that last one away because you were so terrified you'd be bad.* But then the lights started flashing, and I'm like, *Oh God, I've said nothing, oh God, get off, but don't get off, don't give it away.* Had I been more articulate, I could have found a profoundly poetic way of saying, 'You like me, you like me,' but since I was the girl who had no education, I went right to the bottom. People immediately criticized me and laughed at me. They don't understand what it's like to be an artist, how hard it is to grow and get better. You get the crap beaten out of you, your psyche is pulverized. The fact of the matter is, I had gotten to a place where I could say, *You know what? I invite you to say what you like when you win your second Oscar, because the chances of that are slim to none.*"

Steel Magnolias 1989

Having just given birth to her third son, Sam, with second husband/producer Alan Greisman (they divorced in 1994), Field relished the opportunity to play Julia Roberts' mom in this homage to parenting and female friendship.

“
People immediately criticized me and laughed at me. You know what? I invite you to say what you like when you win your second Oscar, because the chances of that are slim to none.”





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THE MUST LIST

Ten Things
We Love This Week
SNUBBED BY OSCAR

1

VOLVER

We're beginning to wonder if Pedro Almodóvar's sublime and dazzlingly Day-Glo'd foray into the mysteries of womanhood was even on the Best Foreign Language Film ballots.

2. SHAREEKA EPPS

Her thoughtful portrayal of an inner-city junior high schooler in *Half Nelson* shows an intelligence and ability seemingly worlds beyond her 17 years.

3. BILL CONDON

The *Dreamgirls* director splendidly breathed life into a project long thought unfilmable—and coaxed Oscar-nominated performances from two of the film's stars.



4. PAN'S LABYRINTH

It's hard to ignore the visual effects—dark, creepy, and elegantly applied—that made Guillermo del Toro's grown-up fairy tale convincingly real.



5. MAGGIE GYLLENHAAL

It's not easy playing a queen. Perhaps even harder is playing a self-absorbed and heartbreakingly self-destructive ex-junkie-thief like she did in *Sherrybaby*.

6. EMILY BLUNT

Unforgettable as the comically ambitious fashion-magazine assistant in *The Devil Wears Prada*, she more than held her own against Der Streep.



7. MATT DAMON

His work as a whip-smart cop working for the Boston Mob in *The Departed*—and as a buttoned-down secret agent in *The Good Shepherd*—was thoughtful, restrained, and brilliant.

8. MICHAEL SHEEN

In *The Queen*, his shrewd, charismatic, and media-savvy Tony Blair was the populist fire to Helen Mirren's clueless and detached regal ice.

9. JASON REITMAN

The first-time director showed talent behind the camera with *Thank You for Smoking*, but also deserves kudos for a razor-sharp screenplay based on Christopher Buckley's acerbic novel.



10

CHILDREN OF MEN

A great script. Solid performances from a first-rate cast. And the most visually compelling direction in years. So why no Best Picture love?

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THE REVIEWS

'BECAUSE I SAID SO' + 'EDDIE MURPHY DELIRIOUS' ON DVD + ABC'S 'RULES OF ENGAGEMENT' + FALL OUT BOY + JAMES PATTERSON



2007
SUNDANCE
HIGHS
& LOWS

(Clockwise from
top left) *Grace Is
Gone*, *Waitress*,
Trade, and *Hounddog*

MOVIES

Snow Business

Sundance boasted the bitter-sweet and the seriously bizarre. Our critics come in from the cold.

Owen Gleiberman

Film festivals tend to be alternate realities. The sunstruck, snowbound, up-where-the-air-is-thin-and-clear beauty of Park City only heightens the worlds-away quality of the Sundance Film Festival, an event that offers one the slightly surreal experience of traipsing through a pristine ski resort to interface with movies that are Dark, Quirky, Aggressively Ironic, Erotically Outré, or Politically Righteous. That disjunction works for the festival—it can make even a modest movie stand out—yet I admit I've grown impatient over the years with how a Sundance film can be celebrated, by audiences and critics (including me), until it sounds bigger and more important than it is.

I saw movies at Sundance this year I'd heartily recommend, like **Joe Strummer: The Future Is Unwritten**, a documentary by Julien Temple (*The*



Chapter 27



The Savages



Year of the Dog



Son of Rambow

Filth and the Fury) that passionately evokes the spiky fervor of the late Clash frontman, or the spooky child-rearing dramedy *Joshua*, or the grippingly journalistic Mexico-to-Jersey sex-trade thriller *Trade*, or David Gordon Green's tender and searing *Snow Angels*, a small-town tale of divorce and adultery, madness and murder, that to me was the movie *Little Children* wanted to be. Months from now, these films will be released, and with a little help from God or fate or maybe Fox Searchlight, they will find a devoted audience. Yet what I was looking for—questing for—at Sundance this year was a film that had the potential to break out of the festival's hothouse bubble atmosphere and cause a genuine stir, maybe even a minor earthquake, in the real world.

I found that film when I saw *No End in Sight*, a coolheaded, devastating exposé that, with the right handling, could turn out to be *An Inconvenient Truth* for the Iraq war. Let's be clear: This is no leftist agitprop, no Michael Moore harangue. The director, Charles Ferguson, works with a thirst for history that transcends ideology, as he gets a platoon of Bush officials, from Richard Armitage to Jay Garner to the eloquently outraged former officer of strategic policy Col. Paul Hughes, to go on record about how their advice was trivialized and ignored. As they speak, the film pulls back, like a telescope, to reveal each link in the gasp-inducing chronology of the Bush team's bungling arrogance. *No End in Sight* leaves you furious at an administration of armchair warriors, yet it offers the catharsis of cold hard truth.

Waitress offers something more uplifting: a

spangly reinvention of the chick flick—and, just maybe, the birth of a movie star. That would be Keri Russell, who's as tartly irresistible as the desserts she creates playing a Southern pie-shop waitress who gets pregnant by her awful husband and then has an affair with her obstetrician (the delightfully befuddled Nathan Fillion). This vibrant comedy of sisterhood embraces the happy craziness of following your instincts at any cost. Early on, there was a hush over the screening, as tribute was paid to the film's writer and director, Adrienne Shelly, who was killed in New York last November. Yet by the end, the tasty bittersweetness of *Waitress* was only enhanced by the revelation of what a talent she possessed.

A handful of other comedies tore muscles as they tried to go mainstream. *Red of the Dog*, the first movie directed by the brilliant screenwriter Mike White (*School of Rock*, *Chuck & Buck*), begins as a sharply funny portrait of a canine-fixated wallflower played, winningly, by Molly Shannon. But as she goes off the deep end, so does the movie. *Son of Rambow*, an English coming-of-age tale in which two public-school boys try to make a home-movie version of *Rambo*, was picked up for more money (\$8 million) than any other Sundance film this year, but for my money it was a fractious and whimsical bore that bonks you over the head with its '80s nostalgia.

Eager to follow the buzz, I felt compelled to check out *Zoo*, a nonfiction look at—how can I put this delicately? I can't—men who have sex with horses. I believe that you can make a good movie about anyone, but *Zoo* sorely tests that theory; it's



Festival Standouts

VERA FARMIGA

Joshua's depressed mom (above) mesmerizes.

FRANK LANGELLA

He's quietly majestic as an aging novelist in *Evening*.

KERI RUSSELL

You'll fall for her romantic urgency in *Waitress*.

JESS WEIXLER

A luminous star is born—it's all about *Teeth*.

a crock. It tells us nothing about these people (or the details of what they do), concocting instead a naive “poetic” meditation on zoophiles as the ultimate misunderstood minority group. I was in the minority myself in disagreeing with the sour buzz over **Chapter 27**, a morbidly fascinating dramatization of Mark David Chapman’s life in the three days leading up to the murder of John Lennon. Directed by Jarrett Shaefer, the film may tell you little about Chapman that you didn’t already know, but Jared Leto, who gained 65 pounds for the role, disappears inside this angry, mouth-breathing psycho geek with a conviction that had me hanging on his every delusion.

Finally, let me return to *Joshua*, in which Sam Rockwell and Vera Farmiga are sensational as wealthy New Yorkers with a new baby girl and a demonically detached 9-year-old boy, played by the marvelous Jacob Kogan. The film is destined to be compared to *The Omen* and *The Bad Seed*, yet it’s something vitally new: a portrait of parental anxiety in the age of technology, hedge-fund capitalism, and kids who are far more brilliant than their elders. It’s a horror comedy that has cool and savvy fun with your fears.

Lisa Schwarzbaum

This was the year Sundance elders marketed a mantra—FOCUS ON FILM—in an effort to clear a festivalgoer’s mind of the distractions of celebrity sightings and rampant swagflation. And the mantra became a freebie button—which is a form of swag, no? Still, I took the message to heart: My Sundance would be about the films—more precisely about the filmmaking—and not the distribution deals or the stuff.

Which is why I was so impressed and excited by **Starting Out in the Evening**, Andrew Wagner’s mature, compassionate, elegantly made drama about a courtly old New York novelist (Frank Langella), his unhappy adult daughter (Lili Taylor), and a bold graduate student (*Six Feet Under*’s superb Lauren Ambrose) who insinuates herself into their Upper West Side lives. Based on the novel by Brian Morton, the movie is shaped, shaded, and polished like fine literature—in well-chosen words, in meaningful silences, and in the intimate visual texture produced by the medium of the HD cam. In Wagner’s bright, ballsy previous film, *The Talent Given Us*, he brought the best out of his own nonactor parents as stars. Here, the filmmaker’s confidence and good taste elicit towering work from Langella—a lifetime beaut of a performance bound for awards—and inspires the rest of his fine cast to shine, too.

I felt I was in similarly strong hands with Tamara Jenkins, who made the striking 1998

Slums of Beverly Hills. Her humane, grown-up drama **The Savages** is undeniably downbeat—Laura Linney and Philip Seymour Hoffman play sister and brother, prickly, wounded adults themselves, who must organize elder care for a difficult father (Philip Bosco), now retreating into dementia. But Jenkins, blessed with the class-act, A-team duo of Linney and Hoffman, has a gift for aerating real pain with real humor.

I keep returning to my interest in the quality of the filmmaking—how a piece is constructed, how one shot connects to the next, how story, script, lighting, editing, pacing, and performance cohere—because so many of the movies that make waves at Sundance don’t. Cohere, that is. For every singular work like **The Pool**—an immaculately observed drama about two poor boys in Goa, India, from documentarian Chris Smith, who made the 1999 indie hit *American Movie*—there’s a derivatively winsome *Rushmore*-meets-*Garden State* comedy about teenage oddballs, like **Rocket Science**. I was intrigued by Jessica Yu’s offbeat, scrapbook-like documentary **Protagonist**, in which four men narrate their own life stories and, in so doing, exemplify elements of classical Greek tragedy. But I was itchy unconvinced by the damp, palliative “prestige issue” drama **Grace Is Gone**, about a patriotic American dad (John Cusack, embracing bad hair, bad eyeglasses, and belly bloat for his art) who can’t bring himself to tell his two young daughters that their soldier mother died in Iraq. So he takes them on a long car trip. (Never once does he make them buckle their seat belts—a nagging distraction.)



Kate Beckinsale

“David Gordon Green’s tender and searing *Snow Angels* is a small-town tale of divorce and adultery, madness and murder.”



CRITICAL MASS

A sampling of critics from across the country grade 10 current releases.

	TY BURR Boston Globe	MIKE CLARK USA Today	LISA KENNEDY The Denver Post	LIAM LACEY Toronto Globe and Mail	MICK LASHALLE San Francisco Chronicle	JACK MATTHEWS N.Y. Daily News	TODD MCCARTHY Variety	GARRIE RUCKY The Philadelphia Inquirer	RENE RODRIGUEZ The Miami Herald	STEPHANIE ZACHAREK Slate.com	ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY	EW READERS*	CRITICS' AVERAGE
BREAKING AND ENTERING	B-	-	C+	-	C+	B	C+	B	C+	D	C+	B-	C+
CATCH AND RELEASE	C+	-	-	-	D	-	C	D	B-	C-	B-	C-	C-
CHILDREN OF MEN	A	A-	B+	A	A	B	A-	B	A	A	A	B+	A-
DREAMGIRLS	B-	B	B	A	B	A	C+	A-	B	C-	B+	B+	B
FREEDOM WRITERS	B	B	B	-	B	-	-	B-	B-	B-	B	B	B
LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA	A	A-	A-	A-	B	A	A	A	A-	C-	A	A-	A-
MISS POTTER	C	-	B-	C	A	C+	-	B	C-	B	B	B	B-
NOTES ON A SCANDAL	A	B-	A-	B+	B	B+	B	B	B	C-	A	A-	B+
▲ THE PAINTED VEIL	B+	B+	C+	C+	A-	B	C+	-	-	A	B+	B+	B+
PAN'S LABYRINTH	A-	A	A	A	B	A+	A-	A	A	A	A	A-	A

*EW READER GRADES come from the Front Row. EW's online reader panel. If you'd like to join, go to frontrowpanel.com/join.



"Teeth is so witty and cheeky a cautionary tale that I can't bring myself to nitpick."

I enjoyed watching Parker Posey be Parker Posey in **Broken English**—effervescent, sexy, in want of a cute man but endearingly terrible at letting love in, even in dreamy *Before Sunset*-scented Paris—but I wish the teeny espresso thimble of a first feature film by Zoe Cassavetes looked less slapdash and whatever-y. I appreciated the ambition of **Chicago 10**, Brett Morgen's snazzed-up attempt to draw parallels between the political ire of Yuppies in 1968 and YouTubers in 2007—but I was frustrated by the facile stylization of the animated sequences, with groovy stars (Nick Nolte, Hank Azaria) voicing real words from the trial of the Chicago Seven. As for **Teeth**, well, the premise of a high school virgin with a body so

keenly adapted to the demands of Christian purity that her vagina comes equipped with teeth is so witty and cheeky a cautionary tale/horror pic/empowerment comedy that I can't bring myself to nitpick. Besides, newcomer Jess Weixler, as the damsel with a vagina *dentata*, is a radiantly funny, blossoming star with a big future ahead.

If the Sundance gods really wanted us to focus exclusively on film, they shouldn't have left treacherous mounds of rubbish lying around. **Weapons**, a foul exercise in suburban teen male swagger, exults in flaunting poorly composed scenes of guys vomiting, urinating on other guys, and shooting them, too, for reasons wise ticket holders didn't stick around to discover. And how's a Zen-minded cineast supposed to concentrate when ambushed by buzz-sniffing TV camera crews trolling for post-screening reactions to **Hounddog**? Here's the thing: The movie is a dumb howler of a Southern gothic about child abuse and the healing powers of a magical black man. It's as risible a tale as ever snookered a handful of good actors (including David Morse, Robin Wright Penn, and the unsinkable Little Miss Dakota Fanning) into saying, "Well, heck, count me in, it sounds like art." Come to think of it, *Hounddog* is one of those instances where the programmers themselves forgot to focus on film. Then again, at a festival this distracting, it's bound to happen. ■

Makes you re-evaluate the whole SUV thing, doesn't it?



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Parent Trap

A lame family comedy takes the great Diane Keaton down with it.

BY LISA SCHWARZBAUM

Because I Said So

Diane Keaton, Mandy Moore
R, 102 mins.
(Universal)

In her mature beauty, her self-effacing wit, and the fashion-forward wardrobe that distinguishes her in fashion-backward Hollywood, Diane Keaton displays a flair that has won her an army of lifelong devotees. I'm a charter member. In *Because I Said So*, Keaton has unfortunately decided that self-caricature is as good as it gets to sustain the affection heaped on her after *Something's Gotta Give*: Her clothes are as cool as ever, but her character, Daphne—a divorced mother of three grown daughters (Lauren Graham, Piper Perabo, Mandy Moore) who meddles neurotically in the love life of her youngest girl, Milly (Moore)—is an unbelievable mess. I mean actually unbelievable, a blur of romantic-comedy foibles (she's a ditz at technology, afraid of romance herself) nevertheless costumed with the confidence of a



Couch potatoes
Keaton and Moore

babe who'd give, say, Jack Nicholson a run for his money. (Stephen Collins subs for Jack as Joe, the guy who breaches Daphne's sexual defenses and high-neckline garb while Milly cozies up to Gabriel Macht as Joe's son.)

Daphne is the dumb girl's Keaton of *Hanging Up* rather than the thinking woman's Keaton of *Something's Gotta Give*. And this slapdash, charmless, baldly boomer-chasing romantic comedy, directed by Michael Lehmann (*Heathers*) from a clunky, orgasm-obsessed script by Karen Leigh Hopkins and Jessie Nelson, is the lazy studio's answer to a call for more age-appropriate entertainment for *More* magazine readers. **D+**

PLAYING DIANE'S DAUGHTER

AMANDA PEET

Something's Gotta Give (2003). She loses Jack Nicholson to another woman: her mom.

KIMBERLY WILLIAMS

The Father of the Bride saga (1991–95). In part 2, she and her mother get pregnant at the same time. Cue high jinks.

SOFIA COPPOLA

The Godfather Part III (1990). She grew up to be a great director, but this is a performance only a mother could love.



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Gag Order

A flock of easy targets makes for a decent exercise in spoofery.

BY OWEN GLEIBERMAN

Epic Movie

Kal Penn, Adam Campbell, Carmen Electra
R, 86 mins.
(20th Century Fox)

When anything-for-a-laugh blockbuster parodists send up horror films or date movies, part of the joke is the way that the plots of various hits are stitched together into a Frankenstein's monster

of franchise silliness. *Epic Movie* works in a different way. You might think that the assorted story elements of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, the *Pirates of the Caribbean* and *X-Men* films, *The Da Vinci Code*, and even *Nacho Libre* would elbow each other in a delightfully skewed fashion, but actually, what's funny is how perfectly their obligatory fight scenes and "heroic" arcs all merge. It turns out that they're all pretentious in the same pandering, sentimental way, and to call attention to that is a pretty good gag.

Where *Epic Movie* fails to rise to the occasion is in mocking those pretensions. Despite all the scatological high jinks on display, most of the satire is affectionate rather than merciless; the movie never dares to urinate on the hand that feeds. There are tasty tidbits, though, like the earnest gay beaver from the land of Gnarnia (ruled by a character known as the White Bitch), or a tweak of *The Da Vinci Code*'s insanely arbitrary chain logic, or a sex scene in which the blue-skinned shape-shifter Mystique sprouts a badonkadonk butt as the very proper British chap gyrating beneath her offers a fearsomely well-enunciated "That's what I'm talking about!" *Epic Movie* is just timely enough to conclude with a wink and a nod to Borat. I only wish that it had been bold enough to go Borat on him. **B-**



Campbell, Jayma Mays, and Penn get their Narnia on

TRAILER PARK

Why wait to review the movies when we can grade the teasers?



1408

It must be hell cutting a horror trailer. You want it to be moody and unsettling, but the temptation is always there to just go for it. The problem with the tail end of the spot for this John Cusack haunted-hotel-room flick is that it goes for it. And misses. **B**



Rescue Dawn

The buzz on this Vietnam-era POW movie is terrific, and I believe it, coming from director Werner Herzog and starring Christian Bale. But so much of it looks like outtakes from *Rambo: First Blood Part II*, I just can't take it seriously. **B-**



Sunshine

The last time we saw a bunch of astro-scientists confined in a spaceship and going bonkers was in the god-awful *Event Horizon*. I have higher hopes for this sci-fi flick, from *Trainspotting*'s Danny Boyle. Of course, we've all been burned before. **B+**



Shooter

Take *Commando*, *The Bourne Identity*, *The Fugitive*—basically every action movie ever—throw 'em in a blender and add Mark Wahlberg as the Sniper Who Knew Too Much. That's not to say it doesn't look like fun. Just not fresh. **B**—Marc Bernardin

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The Situation

Connie Nielsen, Damian Lewis, Mido Hamada
R, 106 mins. (Shadow)

The situation in Iraq is a mess. And this *Situation*, directed by Philip Haas (*Angels & Insects*), attempts to explain it from all sides, in an overstuffed, unengaging drama that makes time for a love triangle in which Anna (Connie Nielsen), an American journalist, shakes her blond hair out of her on-the-job head scarf after hours with a CIA man (Damian Lewis) and an Iraqi photographer (Mido Hamada). The script, by journalist Wendell Steavenson, shows the writer's training: Characters "report" their political positions while Anna looks on, powerless. **C+**—LS



Blood and Chocolate

Agnes Bruckner, Hugh Dancy, Olivier Martinez
PG-13, 98 mins. (MGM)

The war between werewolves and humans—not to mention the one between Prague location scouts and Bucharest location scouts—has claimed many victims, among them the potency of the metaphor. Werewolves are tame with overuse, and movies like this one—where moments of inspiration vie in vain with Goth cliché—play like underlit *Charmed* reruns. Agnes Bruckner is the toothsome Juliet to Hugh Dancy's human Romeo, but only *Brothers of the Head*'s Bryan Dick, as a prodigal wolf boy, seems truly lupine. **C+**—Scott Brown



Screamers

R, 91 mins. (Maya)

Instead of opening a concert with "Hello, Boston!" or some other cozy rock bona fides, Serj Tankian, the lead singer of System of a Down, offers the slightly loftier "It's time to make the Turkish government pay for their f---ing crime!" He's referring to the Armenian genocide of 1915, a calamity Turkish officials deny to this day. System of a Down, whose members are the grandsons of genocide survivors, anchor this musical and political documentary with surprising gravitas, and the film offers true insight into the patterns of war crimes, even if the songs sound disquietingly close to a call to violence. **B**—OG

Now Playing

Breaking and Entering

R, 120 mins.
Attractive, articulate adults (Jude Law and Robin Wright Penn) take on the weight of the multi-culti world in Anthony Minghella's chilly exercise in Gentry Guit. **C+** (#918/919, Feb. 2) —LS

Catch and Release

PG-13, 111 mins.
No chick will make sense of this tangled flick in which a bride-to-be learns about the secret life of her late fiancé. Really? She didn't know? With Jennifer Garner and Timothy Olyphant. **C-** (#918/919, Feb. 2) —LS

Children of Men

R, 109 mins.
Clive Owen stars in an invigoratingly bleak drama set in a disintegrating near-future where infertility has killed all hope for the living. A dystopian dazzler. **A** (#915, Jan. 12) —LS

Dreamgirls

PG-13, 131 mins.
The rare musical with real rapture in it—though in the second half, the drama turns a bit hollow. **B+** (#912, Dec. 22) —OG

The Hitcher

R, 90 mins.
John Ryder (Sean Bean), the homicidal road-rage terrorist, shows up anytime, anywhere. That's the main reason this remake is as processed and hoot-worthy as the original. **C-** (#918/919, Feb. 2) —OG

Night at the Museum

PG, 110 mins.
Doing night-guard duty when the entire Museum of Natural History comes alive, Ben Stiller doesn't Focker around nearly enough. **C+** (#915, Jan. 12) —LS

Notes on a Scandal

R, 92 mins.
Sensationally nasty, Cate Blanchett is the teacher who beds a student, and Judi Dench is the spinster who blackmails her. **A** (#915, Jan. 12) —OG

Pan's Labyrinth

R, 112 mins.
A deeply felt history lesson set in 1944 fascist Spain, an adult fairy tale, and a hypnotically beautiful work of art. Guillermo del Toro's great chameleon story is perfectly attuned to the powers of myth and childhood imagination. **A** (#917, Jan. 26) —LS

Seraphim Falls

R, 115 mins.
In this brooding Western revenge psychodrama, Pierce Brosnan proves his acting chops as a former Union officer being chased by a man with a vendetta. Brosnan and Liam Neeson make good foils, though you wish that this sparsely mythic tale had a twinge of something new. **B-** (#918/919, Feb. 2) —OG

Smokin' Aces

R, 107 mins.
A cheerfully disposable gangland freak-show thriller ride. When a Vegas magician (Jeremy Piven) agrees to rat out his Mob connections, he's descended on by assassins who keep upping the ante on sociopathic irreverence. You can't take this mash-up of *GoodFellas*, *Ocean's Eleven*, and a Rob Zombie horror flick seriously, but it's as lively as it is debased. **B** (#918/919, Feb. 2) —OG

Stomp the Yard

PG-13, 114 mins.
Stepping, a tradition of Greek campus life at black universities, gets the busy music-video treatment. **C+** (#916, Jan. 19) —LS

THE CHART

BOX OFFICE

1

Epic Movie

Fox's scatological spoof beat out three other new releases, not to mention a slew of newly minted Oscar nominees to take the weekend's top slot—a position that was held by *Big Momma's House 2* last year.



THE TOP 20

		WEEKEND GROSS*	NUMBER OF SITES†	WEEKEND PER SITE AVERAGE	PERCENTAGE CHANGE	WEEKS IN RELEASE	GROSS TO DATE
1	EPIC MOVIE	\$18.6	2,801	\$6,645	—	1	\$18.6
2	SMOKIN' ACES	\$14.6	2,218	\$6,600	—	1	\$14.6
3	NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM ➔ Fox's December comedy shows little sign of slowing down; the Ben Stiller museum flick only dropped 20 percent—in its sixth weekend out, it's on track to become at least the third-highest grossing film of 2006.	\$9.6	3,241	\$2,949	-20	6	\$216.8
4	STOMP THE YARD	\$7.7	2,115	\$3,634	-37	3	\$50.5
5	CATCH AND RELEASE	\$7.7	1,622	\$4,722	—	1	\$7.7
6	DREAMGIRLS ➔ First no Best Picture Oscar nod, now no post-nomination box office bump. Despite expanding its theater count, Paramount's musical adaptation, starring presumptive Oscar winner Eddie Murphy, posted a 33 percent fall in the per-theater average.	\$6.7	2,785	\$2,421	-16	7	\$86.8
7	THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS	\$5.0	2,688	\$1,854	-21	7	\$152.9
8	PAN'S LABYRINTH	\$4.8	823	\$5,801	+6	5	\$16.5
9	THE QUEEN	\$4.0	1,830	\$2,193	+18	18	\$41.3
10	THE HITCHER	\$3.6	2,836	\$1,281	-54	2	\$13.4
11	FREEDOM WRITERS	\$3.5	2,273	\$1,546	-33	4	\$31.1
12	THE DEPARTED ➔ Fittingly, the highest-grossing Best Picture candidate was also the one to reap the most financial benefit after the nominations; the Warner Bros. drama upped its theater count to 1,453 for a 1,015 percent bump.	\$3.4	1,453	\$2,316	+1,015	17	\$125.2
13	NOTES ON A SCANDAL	\$2.6	641	\$4,062	+123	5	\$9.1
14	BABEL	\$2.6	1,090	\$2,350	+24	14	\$27.2
15	CHILDREN OF MEN	\$2.2	1,273	\$1,715	-41	5	\$30.9
16	BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE	\$2.1	1,200	\$1,729	—	1	\$2.1
17	LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA	\$1.9	415	\$4,500	+38	6	\$5.1
18	ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES	\$1.7	1,718	\$992	-45	5	\$11.5
19	THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND	\$1.7	501	\$3,343	+4	18	\$7.7
20	CHARLOTTE'S WEB	\$1.5	1,345	\$1,112	-36	7	\$78.9

SOURCE: NIELSEN EDI. WEEKEND OF JAN. 26-28 *WEEKEND-GROSS AND GROSS-TO-DATE FIGURES IN MILLIONS †INCLUDES SOME MULTISCREEN THEATERS AND PRINTS SHIPPED AS WELL AS INDIVIDUAL SCREENS

Red-Hot And Blue

Decades before *Dreamgirls*, Eddie Murphy shocked and awed with his stand-up style.

BY KEN TUCKER



Murphy hits below the belt

Eddie Murphy
Delirious

Unrated, 70 mins.,
1983



Backstory

+ Eddie Murphy tells interviewer Byron Allen that whenever he needs to get angry in any of his movies—beginning with 1982's *48 HRS.*—he copies his facial expression from Bruce Lee (above).

which originally aired on HBO, is fondly remembered for a 22-year-old Murphy, clad in a tight red leather suit, holding forth with seemingly effortless mastery. Whether he's doing a spot-on impersonation of Elvis Presley or reminiscing about waiting, as a child, for the ice cream man, Murphy's tone is generous, his detail work impeccable (his Elvis croon is fantastic), and his beguiling smile an unguarded joy that would steadily diminish over the years as he became a big, more self-conscious movie star.

But the freewheeling atmosphere of this time-capsule DVD also captures a few moments that now seem pretty dicey, to say the least. Within minutes of taking the stage of Washington, D.C.'s Constitution Hall, Murphy says he's self-conscious about wearing those red pants because of the gay men in the audience—except he doesn't say “gay,” he uses the F-word uttered by *Grey's Anatomy's* Isaiah Washington about costar T.R. Knight. Given that slur's fresh timeliness, hearing it come out of Murphy's mouth repeatedly, casually, is startling—and robbed of humor. Similarly, Murphy suddenly

veers off onto another topic, “that new AIDS s---” that “kills motherf---ers.” He chides married women who spend time with gay male friends, kiss them goodbye, and then “go home with that AIDS on their lips” to pass the infection on to their husbands. The crowd goes wild; you're likely to just gasp.

Actually, great comedian that he is, Murphy does work up a funny bit with this subject matter, when he envisions *The Honeymooners'* Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton as lovers. This material works for two reasons: He imagines the pair as having really fun sex, and his Gleason is hilariously precise. (In the only significant DVD extra, a new interview with comic Byron Allen, Murphy says a false rumor spread for years that the Great One wrote him a letter that read, in its entirety, “Murphy: Stop! Gleason.”)

The rest of *Delirious* is pretty wonderful, for both the killer quality of his material (the ice-cream-man routine can stand with the work of his idol, Bill Cosby) and its period details (his mention of then president Ronald Reagan prompts an eloquent heckle: “Reaganomics sucks!”).

And don't miss the brief extra scene that shows Murphy's response to a crowd member calling for his Buckwheat impersonation. Murphy's reply is less unprintable than unreproducible here—I can't show you where he puts his hand, but trust me, it's funny. **B+**



Anything but Love Volume 1

Jamie Lee Curtis,
Richard Lewis

Unrated, 732 mins.,
1989–90

This sophisticated workplace will-they-or-won't-they cast Curtis as aspiring writer Hannah and Lewis as neurotic *Chicago Weekly* wordsmith Marty. Think of it as *When Harry Met Sally...* meets *NewsRadio*. Then be prepared to live with episode 28's romantic cliff-hanger—until volume 2 is released. **EXTRAS** The dishy "All About..." featurette tracks the series from its original, overhauled pilot to the moment the stars arrived for a season 4 table read and discovered they'd been canceled.

B+ —Mandi Bierly



The Grudge 2 Director's Cut

Amber Tamblyn,
Sarah Michelle Gellar

Unrated, 108 mins., 2006

Five more sequels couldn't shed light on this fuzzy backstory of a killer curse stemming from a double murder-suicide. *Grudge 2* plunks Tamblyn (as Gellar's sister) into a thankless role, and three intertwining stories favor gore-free scares over exposition. Oh, forget the details. The ghosts will make you jump. **EXTRAS** Deleted scenes and shorts, plus four featurettes that paint Japanese director Takashi Shimizu as a creative martyr, decrying the demands of U.S. viewers: "I had to argue all the time with the American producers." **B-** —Tanner Stransky

War Stories

'FLAGS' DAY

With the Oscar-nominated *Iwo Jima* on the front lines, Clint Eastwood's ode to the flag-raising Marines is confined to the barracks

As *Letters From Iwo Jima* barrels through awards season on a groundswell of rave reviews, Clint Eastwood's earlier *Iwo Jima* movie, **FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS** (R, 132 mins., 2006), hits DVD with a whimper—not a single extra—rather than a bang. That's a disservice to a film that honorably but fatally tries to be all



war movies to all audiences. Is *Flags* (A) a bullet-pocked battle re-creation à la *Saving Private Ryan*, (B) a meditation on what heroism means under fire and at home, (C) a Media Culture 101 essay on the ways in which the iconic flag-raising photo was used and abused, or (D) a study of post-traumatic stress among the Marines? (E) All of the above. Unfortunately, multitasking has never been Eastwood's forte—straightforward eloquence is—and the lack of focus muddies a fine performance from Adam Beach (above) as a Marine torn between honoring his country and his fallen fellows. Here's one case where a director's commentary, rising to the defense of an overshadowed work, would be most welcome. Consider this a stopgap release until the proper—and inevitable—special-edition pairing with *Letters*. **B-** —Ty Burr

Not So Sunny Valentine

Divorce! Death! Infidelity! To mark the most romantic day of the year, Warner dusts off five films (each making its DVD debut, each sold separately) that look askew at love. —Melissa Rose Bernardo and Sean Howe



A SUMMER PLACE

(1959) This soapy Troy Donahue–Sandra Dee pic about young lust and parental infidelity can't decide which to vilify more: prudishness or passion. Once daring ("Have you been bad with girls?"); now famed for Max Steiner's theme and for inspiring a *Grease* song. **C+**



MIRACLE IN THE RAIN

(1956) A stenog (Jane Wyman), a soldier (Van Johnson), a whirlwind romance, and a fortuitous storm make for great rainy-day viewing. The *Affair to Remember*/Shakespearean tragedy tone, however, isn't exactly the stuff of a romantic evening. **B**



THE CLOCK

(1945) Judy Garland meets soldier Robert Walker in Penn Station (or a Hollywood replica thereof); they spend 48 hours wandering the city, falling in love, getting a marriage license...time's a-ticking! It's the proto-*Before Sunrise*, diluted with flat comedy attempts. **B-**



BLUME IN LOVE

(1973) An unfaithful divorce lawyer (George Segal) pines for his ex-wife while visiting yoga classes and swinger bars. Segal parleys doxy expressions into sympathy until his Blume makes an unforgivable choice, and interest shifts to period details like ferns, wicker, and Marsha Mason. **B-**



CROSSING DELANCEY

(1988) A bookstore clerk (Amy Irving), embarrassed by and entrenched in her Lower East Side Jewish upbringing, falls, despite her best efforts, for a humble pickle man (*Animal House* alum Peter Riegert). Sweet and sour—much like the perfect pickle. **B+**



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Hollywoodland

Ben Affleck, Diane Lane
R, 126 mins., 2006

In this golden-era-set whodunit/Affleck resurrection vehicle, the star eloquently captures the shame and pain of TV's first Superman, George Reeves, a B-level striver who allegedly committed suicide in 1959. Unfortunately, his downfall is paired with a quasi-parallel, less engaging tale about a fictional detective (Adrien Brody) trying to crack the case. **EXTRAS** Director Allen Coulter offers a period-detail-packed commentary, including an anecdote (portrayed in the film) about chichi Ciro's restaurant buzz-sawing a table to make room for a pregnant Rita Hayworth. **B**—Michelle Kung



Advice From a Caterpillar

Cynthia Nixon, Andy Dick
Unrated, 94 mins., 2000

Before becoming known as one of *Sex and the City*'s swinging Manhattanites, Nixon played another love-lorn New Yorker, an artist torn between a married man (Jon Tenney) and the bisexual lover (Timothy Olyphant) of her best pal Spaz (Dick). Writer Douglas Carter Beane has mastered the emotional fallout of human sexuality—both gay and straight—on film (1995's *To Wong Foo...*) and on stage (2006's *Little Dog Laughed*), and that thankfully saves *Caterpillar* from emerging as just a racy episode of *Three's Company*. **EXTRAS** None. **B**—Paul Katz



Running With Scissors

Annette Bening, Joseph Cross, Brian Cox
R, 122 mins., 2006

This slick adaptation of Augusten Burroughs' fanciful memoir of a boundary-free childhood establishes a vibrant, music-video-esque palette; the grade-A cast (especially the exquisite Bening) lands every line; comedy and pathos fight tooth and nail for narrative pull. It's invigorating entertainment, but we can't connect to these caricatures. **EXTRAS** A less-than-incisive interview with Burroughs and quickie featurettes...set to a soft-core-porn soundtrack. A nod to *Scissors*' '70s setting, or a horrible miscalculation? **B-**—Kirven Blount

THE CHART

DVD SALES

1 GRIDIRON GANG

Can you smell what The Rock is cooking? His feel-good football flick scored a sales touchdown in its first week on the charts.



TOP 20

		LAST WEEK	BOX OFFICE GROSS TO DATE*	WEEKS IN RELEASE	EW GRADE
1	GRIDIRON GANG ➔ <i>Wrestler/actor Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson played for the University of Miami Hurricanes and even considered a career in the NFL.</i>	—	\$38.4	1	B
2	EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH	—	\$28.4	1	C
3	THE TEXAS CHAINSAW...	—	\$39.5	1	D+
4	THE PROTECTOR	—	\$12.0	1	B ⁺
5	THE ILLUSIONIST	2	\$39.8	2	A-
6	CRANK	1	\$27.8	2	B ⁺
7	JACKASS NUMBER TWO	3	\$72.8	4	B ⁺
8	THAT'S SO SUITE LIFE OF... ➔ <i>'That's So Suite Life of Hannah Montana: Mixed-Up Mash-Up Edition' features the three most-watched episodes of the Disney Channel original series 'That's So Raven,' 'The Suite Life of Zach & Cody,' and 'Hannah Montana'—plus a 'Hannah' music video and a never-before-seen 'Cody' show.</i>	—	—	1	—
9	THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA	7	\$124.7	6	B+
10	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN...	5	\$423.3	7	B+
11	CARS	12	\$244.1	11	A
12	TALLADEGA NIGHTS...	11	\$148.2	6	B+
13	BARNYARD	10	\$72.6	6	B-
14	THE COVENANT	4	\$23.4	3	D ⁺
15	UNDISPUTED II: LAST MAN...	—	—	1	—
16	LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE ➔ <i>This wonky tale is the only Best Picture nominee available on DVD. 'The Departed' hits Feb. 13 and 'Babel' Feb. 20; 'The Queen' and 'Letters From Iwo Jima' have yet to set release dates.</i>	14	\$59.6	5	B+
17	STEP UP	13	\$65.3	5	B ⁺
18	SNAKES ON A PLANE	6	\$34.0	3	B
19	AIR BUDDIES	18	—	6	C-
20	BROKEN BRIDGES	8	\$0.3	2	—

SOURCES: RENTRAX RETAIL ESSENTIALS FOR THE WEEK ENDING JAN. 20, 2007; NIELSEN EDI *IN MILLIONS
† ORIGINAL THEATRICAL GRADE

What's New in...Boxed Sets

'BEST PICTURE' SHOW

From sinking ships and Scottish revolutions to swordplay and Shirley MacLaine, seven morbid pics prove Oscar's the key to an afterlife



"Every man dies," opined William Wallace, the condemned Scottish rebel in Mel Gibson's *Braveheart*. "Not every man really lives." It's not the best motto for those hoping to appear in the sequel, but it's a proven strategy for Best Picture glory. Oscar has a weakness for heartbreaking tragedy, exemplified by the seven films in Paramount/DreamWorks' **BEST PICTURE COLLECTION** (R/PG-13/PG; 18 hrs., 15 mins.;

1972–2000). *Titanic* isn't the same film if Jack and Rose survive to become king and queen of the world, and *Gladiator*'s totally different if Maximus goes on to lead a military junta. Just imagine if *The Godfather*'s Sonny Corleone remembers to bring his E-ZPass. The Academy, it seems, demands a sacrifice, be it *Forrest Gump*'s beloved Jenny or *American Beauty*'s rejuvenated sad sack Lester Burnham (played by Kevin Spacey, above). (Look no further than all five nominees for this year's Best Picture.) Unlike *Forrest*'s box of chocolates, you know exactly what you're getting with this collection: indelible characters, iconic imagery, and the grim reaper. And even though a few of the titles (like *Terms of Endearment*) skimp on the extras, all seven Oscar winners have a long and rewarding shelf life. **B+**—Jeff Labrecque



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Less than
Engage-ing:
Hudson and
Spade

Broken 'Rules'

ABC's *Rules of Engagement* stays wedded to tired clichés about love and marriage.

BY GILLIAN FLYNN

**Rules of
Engagement**
Mondays,
9:30 p.m.
CBS

Men are oafish, smelly, barely sensate creatures who never do anything instinctually thoughtful and must be trained like dent-headed monkey-slobs to perform even the most basic of tasks. This is my primary objection to "couples comedies": They insist that men are idiots, and that women, perforce, are eye-rolling harri-dan-saints who nag and hector their husbands, yet ultimately understand their limitations. Monkey-slobs drink too much beer and don't appreciate things like art, but that's to be expected because they're so dumb. The entire scenario is as old as the hair scarf of Andy Capp's wife Flo, reeking of cigarette smoke and dead dreams and ridicule. And maybe ham salad.

Rules of Engagement, CBS' latest offering to the genre, follows two couples. One pair, Adam and Jennifer, has just gotten engaged (*The Mountain's* Oliver Hudson and *Vanished's* Bianca Kajlich); the other, Jeff and Audrey, has been married for over a decade (*The Tick's* Patrick Warburton and Megyn Price, who already served four years in marital purgatory on *Grounded for Life*). Sooooo one duo still has lots of sex and the other, less. It's funny because it's true! Or it's not that funny at all. *Rules* is similar to Fox's grimly unamusing comedy *'Til Death*, but it has one major advantage: deadpan, rubbery Patrick Warbur-

ton. In *Rules*, he plays his married version of Pud-dy on *Seinfeld*, which enables him to get laughs out of used-up jokes like, Men don't like foreplay but they really like football. "Be ready for sex more than three minutes before *SportsCenter*," he advises his wife after she complains about the briefness of their encounters. This mountain-size dude with a voice from a beef commercial and the cockiness of a cologne salesman makes a few of the gags work through sheer force of personality. And as the token womanizing best friend, Russell, David Spade pops up like a rangy meerkat, and swipes a few laughs before scuttling away.

But the central problem remains: These comedies are based on shortcomings and disappointment. And unless their writing is as frank as *Roseanne* or as slightly surreal as *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, the shows are less amusing than depressing. Sure, the guy comes through in the end (the lug lets his wife shop, for instance) and the girl suffers through the silliness (thanks to a bottle of wine and some new shoes). But are we all truly that quietly desperate and deeply, deeply boring? Why not a fresher take—of the *Thin Man* variety—with a clever couple who actually doted on each other, who bantered rather than mocked? It would require nimbler writing and a much cheerier outlook. But it would be nice to think that men and women had more interesting topics of conversation than mortgages and forgotten birthdays. **C-**

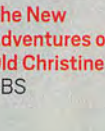
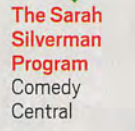
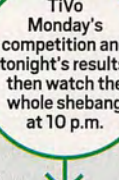


Backstory

+ Oliver Hudson learned from a pro. *Laverne & Shirley's* Cindy Williams (above) was married to his dad in the '80s and '90s.
+ Patrick Warburton also voices Brock Samson on Cartoon Network's *The Venture Bros.* and Joe on Fox's *Family Guy*.

How to Create Your Perfect Week of TV

Last time we did this chart, '24' and 'Idol' were off the air and 'Gilmore Girls' was still required viewing (sigh). Prime time changes fast, so here's an updated viewing guide. Watch the shows in black live and record the red ones.

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
8:00	Amazing Race CBS Premieres Feb. 18 	Battlestar Galactica Sci Fi 	American Idol Fox 	Friday Night Lights NBC 	Survivor: Fiji CBS 	How I Met Your Mother CBS 	The Simpsons Fox 
8:30						The New Adventures of Old Christine CBS 	The Sarah Silverman Program Comedy Central 
9:00	Desperate Housewives ABC 	24 Fox 	House Fox 	America's Next Top Model The CW Premieres Feb. 28 	Grey's Anatomy ABC 	The Office NBC 	Bones Fox 
9:30			TiVo Monday's competition and tonight's results, then watch the whole shebang at 10 p.m. 			30 Rock NBC 	
10:00	Brothers & Sisters ABC 	Heroes NBC 	Dancing With the Stars ABC Premieres March 19 	Lost ABC 	Ugly Betty ABC 	Men in Trees ABC 	CSI CBS 
10:30							

SOFER'S CHOICE

An actress who appears on 'Heroes' and '24' helps you choose

If you're like Rena Sofer, you can't decide which hit drama to watch on Mondays at 9 p.m. The difference: She actually guest-stars on both, as wheelchair-bound Heidi on *Heroes* and Jack's sister-in-law, Marilyn, on *24*. We pressed her to pick a favorite. —Dan Snierson



WHY SHE CHOOSES '24'

+ "It's less confusing to watch one man save the world than a bunch of people save the world. And you don't need subtitles."
+ "It's easier on your stomach to see buildings and helicopters explode as opposed to people."
+ "You don't have to invest too much in the future—on *24* at least you know the world gets saved in a day."
+ "Unlike Isaac, Jack doesn't need to do heroin to save the world...except in season 3."
+ "You can actually see me walk on *24* as opposed to *Heroes*, where you only see me sit in a chair."



WHY SHE CHOOSES 'HEROES'

+ "It might take Jack 24 hours to save the world on *24*, but Hiro can stop time and save the world in 20 minutes if he wants to."
+ "On *Heroes*, we don't need nukes to blow up the world—we can use Peter."
+ "There's a slightly better chance of seeing colorful costumes and flying capes on *Heroes* than on *24*."
+ "It's more politically correct to watch minorities save the world on *Heroes* than destroy the world on *24*."
+ "'Save the cheerleader, save the world!' is a cooler phrase than 'Dammit, Chloe, we're running out of time!'"

SOUND BITES

"Milhouse, thanks to you, the nerds can breathe easy! Except the ones with asthma. Which is all of them."

—LISA, CELEBRATING MILHOUSE'S TRIUMPH OVER BULLIES, ON *THE SIMPSONS*



"You could give Marcel, like, a piece of rat crap and he could probably make it look pretty on the plate—but is it going to taste good?"

—SAM, DISSING FELLOW CONTESTANT MARCEL, ON *TOP CHEF*

"Wow, this is one trashed lab. All that's missing is a big hole in the wall shaped like the Hulk."

—MAC (TINA MAJORINO), AFTER RESPONDING TO A RESEARCH LAB'S REQUEST FOR TECH SUPPORT, ON *VERONICA MARS*

"Let us just stand here and let the awkwardness wash over us."

—MICHEL (YANIC TRUESDALE), GIVING UP ON TRYING TO CHAT WITH LUKE (SCOTT PATTERSON), ON *GILMORE GIRLS*

"Things are heating up between John Mayer and Jessica Simpson, with Simpson accompanying Mayer for part of his tour in Florida. Mayer is working on a new song called 'Your Body Is a Wonderland, and Your Brain Is a Wind Tunnel.'"

—JOEL McHALE, ON *THE SOUP*

THE CHART

THE RATINGS

1 AMERICAN IDOL

American history seems bound to repeat itself: Crooners hoping to be the next Kelly Clarkson again dominate the ratings.



THE TOP 20

		VIEWERS*	LAST WEEK
1	AMERICAN IDOL Fox, Wednesday, 8 p.m.	33.9	3
2	AMERICAN IDOL Fox, Tuesday, 8 p.m.	32.6	2
3	GREY'S ANATOMY ABC, Thursday, 9 p.m.	21.5	4
4	CSI CBS, Thursday, 9 p.m.	21.2	5
5	CSI: MIAMI CBS, Monday, 10 p.m.	18.9	17
6	DEAL OR NO DEAL NBC, Monday, 8 p.m.	17.6	—
7	TWO AND A HALF MEN CBS, Monday, 9 p.m.	15.8	21
8	COLD CASE CBS, Sunday, 8 p.m.	15.1	—
9	HEROES NBC, Monday, 9 p.m.	14.9	—
10	NCIS CBS, Tuesday, 8 p.m.	14.8	8
	THE VALLEY OF LIGHT CBS, Sunday, 9 p.m. ➔ Without a new episode of ABC's 'Desperate Housewives' to get in its way, this sentimental Hallmark TV movie did as well as the straitlaced 'NCIS' folks this week.	14.8	—
12	24 Fox, Monday, 9 p.m.	14.5	9
13	60 MINUTES CBS, Sunday, 7 p.m.	14.3	—
14	SHARK (R) CBS, Tuesday, 10:01 p.m.	14.1	10
15	CSI: NY CBS, Wednesday, 10 p.m.	13.4	13
16	OLD CHRISTINE CBS, Monday, 9:30 p.m.	12.8	25
17	CSI: MIAMI CBS, Thursday, 8 p.m.	12.2	—
18	EXTREME MAKEOVER: HOME EDITION (R) ABC, Sunday, 8 p.m.	12.1	16
19	MEN IN TREES ABC, Thursday, 10 p.m. ➔ This time slot couldn't save 'Six Degrees,' and now the Anne Heche dramedy is having a rough go of it too, fumbling 10.8 million viewers from its 'Grey's Anatomy' lead-in.	10.7	22
20	AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS (R) ABC, Sunday, 7 p.m.	10.4	—
	OFF THE CHART Returning from a seven-week hiatus, NBC's 'Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip' (47) brought in a disappointing 7.3 million viewers—little more than half the audience it debuted with in October.		

* IN MILLIONS

WEEK OF JAN. 22—JAN. 28, 2007

SOURCE: NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH

BY ALYNDA WHEAT

WHAT to WATCH

A day-to-day guide to notable programs*



The music and Maines: Are Grammy and the Chicks ready to make nice?

SUNDAY 2.11

► **PREVIEW**

8-11:30PM

The 49th Annual Grammy Awards CBS

Tune in for an evening of deception, as the struggling music biz squeezes into a gown, slaps on the makeup, and pretends that everything is just fine. Really. At any rate, it promises to be quite the show, what with the Police reuniting, a possible red-state-baiting win for the Dixie Chicks, and the Red Hot Chili Peppers' bare-chested alterna-funk. Here's the key question: Who will Justin Timberlake bring as his date? \$20 says it's his mom. —*Michael Endelman*

Monday 2.05

8-8:30PM

Everybody Hates Chris The CW, TV-PG

Under the theory that being trapped in school with Jason Alexander—and *only* Jason Alexander—isn't nearly as *Hell House* as it sounds.

9-9:30PM

Two and a Half Men CBS, TV-14-L

Ignoring useless minutiae like wives and oxen, Charlie simply found it more efficient to covet his neighbor. Brooke Shields guests.

9-11PM

Montana Sky Lifetime, TV-14-V

A Johnny Appleseed dad spreads his, uh, *fruit* far and wide—then makes everyone live together like some sort of freaky, half-sibling salad.

9-10PM
24

Fox, TV-14-V

Hey, Jack, while you're dealing with the nuclear fallout, why don't you take your ~~son~~ nephew with you? Learn the boy somethin'.

9:30-10PM

The Game

The CW

And the award for Most Appropriate Guest goes to *The Game*: Jerry Rice visits.

CSI Deathwatch!

10-11PM

CSI: Miami

CBS, TV-14-V

Somebody takes a bullet, but who deserves it most?

A. Mr. Wolf: Because what is that, some kind of smart-ass Tarantino reference?

B. Natalia: She's trouble.

C. Alexx: Because we didn't know until this day that it was spelled with two Xs.

10-11PM

In Style Celebrity Weddings

ABC, TV-PG

TomKat, Avril and Deryck, Tori and Dean—hey, why don't *they* have nicknames? Do we like ToriD? ADvil?

10:01-10:59PM

Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip

NBC, TV-14-DL

Natalie Cole guests in this second half of a two-parter. And Danny's still stalking Jordan and it's still creepy.



8-8:30PM

How I Met Your Mother CBS, TV-PG-L

This Super Bowl-themed episode features the enormously likable *Mother* cast in a dilemma when a pal's funeral falls on the same day as the pigskin bonanza. The friends vow to skip the live broadcast and watch it together the next day—and we'll leave it to you to imagine how hard it is to avoid hearing that score. The episode is a prime example of *Mother's* sharp writing and underrated ensemble. It's a shame the show isn't exactly a ratings score for CBS, but we'll choose quality over quantity any day. **A-** —*Tim Stack*

Tuesday 2.06

8-9PM

Gilmore Girls
The CW, TV-PG

Okay, Lorelai, so your man's not by your side while your dad's hospitalized. It's not the end of the world. I mean, it's not like Rory's boyfriend jumped on a helicopter, or anything. Oh...wait.

10-11PM

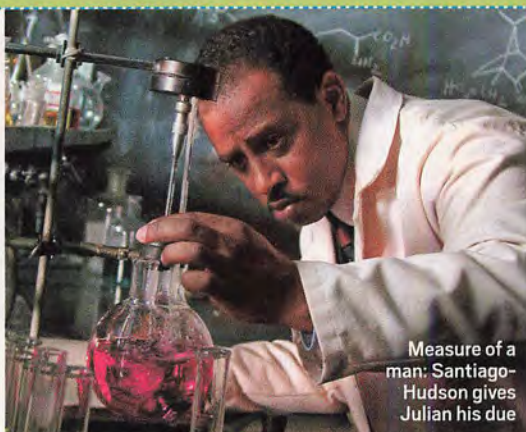
Boston Legal
ABC

A judge sues a company for not "curing" him of his raging case of gay, and Denise is knocked up—though clearly not by that judge.

10-11:45PM

Bastards of the Party
HBO, TV-MA

Antoine Fuqua (*Training Day*) produces and former Blood Cle "Bone" Sloan directs this real-life look at the rise of black gangs in Los Angeles.



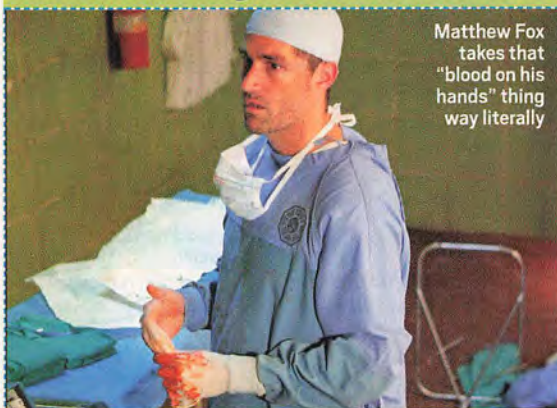
Measure of a man: Santiago-Hudson gives Julian his due

8-10PM*

Nova: Forgotten Genius PBS, TV-G

It's a shame we have to wait for Black History Month to get films like this. Ruben Santiago-Hudson (*Lackawanna Blues*) stars and Courtney B. Vance (*Law & Order: Criminal Intent*) narrates a docudrama on chemist Percy Julian, who was sort of the Jackie Robinson of the lab. In case you didn't encounter him in school (sadly likely), you can thank Julian for innovations in steroids and plastics, among other things. And while *Genius* could have felt like a dusty lecture, it proves a stirring portrait of a great man—though you may end up a little annoyed with your fourth-grade teacher. **B+** —Tanner Stransky *check local listings

Wednesday 2.07



Matthew Fox takes that "blood on his hands" thing way literally

10-11PM

Lost ABC, TV-14-V

I'm not going to screw around. It's good. Really good. Like season-one, stuff-gets-answered, can't-wait-for-the-next-episode good. To recap: Ben is bleeding out on the table. Jack is demanding the release of Kate and Sawyer. And the fan base is demanding some frickin' forward movement. Well, how about the full-on Juliette backstory? Information about how the Others ended up on the Island? Super-creepy Dharma experiment sequences? Yeah. You know you want it. And by the end, you'll be begging for more. Well, that, and praying that this isn't just another tease from a show that always seems to start strong out of the gate. **A** —Daniel Fierman

8-9PM

Friday Night Lights
TV-PG-L

Like *Avenue Q* says, "everyone's a little bit racist"—but most of us hide it better than a certain assistant coach.

8-9PM

Bones
Fox, TV-14-DLSV

Anglophiles and *Bones* fans rarely overlap, but tonight they're in a cuddle puddle. Stephen Fry guests.

8:30-9PM

The Knights of Prosperity
ABC

The knights break into Mick Jagger's apartment.

10-11PM

CSI: NY
CBS, TV-14-LV

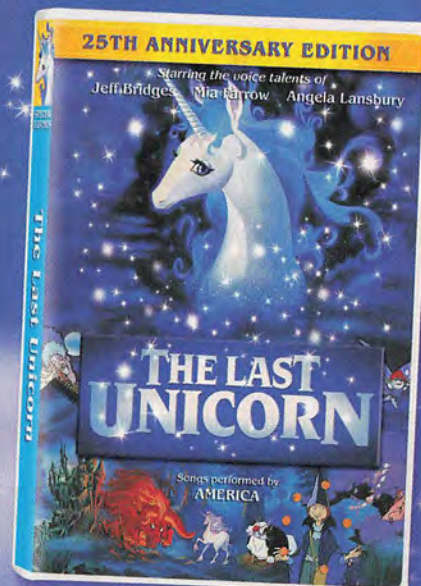
Nelly Furtado guests as a shoplifter. But don't steal her music off the Web!

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Thursday 2.08

Land ho: The castaways hit a watershed moment



SEASON PREMIERE

INSIDE LOOK

8-9PM

Survivor: Fiji CBS

Exile Island? Vacation station. Race war? That was so then. Now in its 14th season, *Survivor*'s cracking a new fault line: class. "In fact," says host Jeff Probst, "it won't seem like *Survivor* for a while," as one tribe suffers in a cave with no fire or water, while the other gets a lavish pad with a kitchen and a couch. "It created animosity very quickly," says Probst, who reveals another twist: Immunity idols must be played at tribal council before votes are read. "There's not going to be any of this [past idol owners] Yul or Terry holding on to it," he promises. "This was the magic solution."

8-8:30PM

'Til Death

Fox, TV-PG-DL

Margaret Cho returns as Joy's "fight friend." Since Joy and Eddie fight constantly, that also makes Cho her best friend.

8:30-9PM

The Office

NBC, TV-14

Is it really so bad if Phyllis "borrowed" some of Pam's ideas for her wedding? It's not like Pam's using them.

10:01-11PM

Men in Trees

ABC

Just fill in *Anne* for *Marin* where ya like: Marin finds a hot new guy to quickly replace the one Marin said she loved, but you know, Marin's kinda done this before, so no one should be surprised that Marin seems to get bored easily.

Friday 2.09

NO MORE DRAMA!

8-9PM

Ghost Whisperer

CBS,

TV-PG-L

Mary J. Blige—yeah, that Mary J. Blige—plays a cheerleading coach with a secret. Sing your pain, MJB!



Season Premiere

9-10PM

Ladette to Lady

Sundance, TV-14

Turning drunken trollops into decent women. Sigh, I know. But even if there were a U.S. version, we couldn't make Lindsay, Paris, and Britney do it.

10-11PM

Psych

USA, TV-PG-L

A beloved weatherman is murdered. Bet that wasn't in his five-day forecast.



SEASON PREMIERE

10-10:30PM

Crank Yankers

MTV2, TV-14-LD

New network, same inane concept (puppets making crank calls), still surprisingly funny. Lil Jon's bit is weak stunt puppeteering, but regulars like Jim Florentine and Sarah Silverman—who tortures a mall security guard with demands to find her lost Jamba Juice—give the hilarious answer to the question "What if the Muppets were bastards?" **B+** —Josh Wolk

Saturday 2.10

6-7PM

THS Investigates: Paparazzi

E!, TV-PG

Fun! It's like watching a dentist get a root canal.

8-10PM

USS Constellation: Battling for Freedom

History, TV-PG

A warship turns its guns on illegal slave traders.

8:30-9PM

Winnie the Pooh, A Valentine for You

ABC, TV-Y

So he's a few days early? Hello? He's a stuffed bear on an all-fructose diet. (R)

9-11PM

Pumpkinhead: Blood Feud

Sci Fi

Why can't they kill this demon series? Oh, right. The undead thing.

Kith and Kim: *High School Musical*'s Ashley Tisdale guests



SEASON PREMIERE

8-10PM

Kim Possible Disney, TV-G

Since we're friends, I'll out myself: I'm a closet *Kim Possible* fan. The crime-fighting cheerleader (Christy Carlson Romano) and her geek-chic sidekick, Ron Stoppable (Will Friedle), battle nifty villains (Señor Senior Sr. is a fave) in tightly choreographed fights, with gadgets that would make Apple drool. And now, they have make-out action, as Kim and Ron drop the platonic bit. It adds dimension, this kissing business, giving Ron so much agita he cheats his way onto the football team to impress his lady. Not that he needs to—Kim's plenty jock enough for the two of them. **A-**

Sunday 2.11

7-9PM

Extreme Makeover: Home Edition

ABC, TV-PG

Ground Zero hero gets the new house—and the credit—he's long deserved.

7-9PM

Grease: You're the One That I Want

NBC, TV-PG

Those nicknames they gave them so we can tell them apart? Not working.

8:30-9PM

King of the Hill

Fox, TV-PG

Snake in a toilet. We worry when *KOTH* borrows plots from *Porky's*. No, *Porky's* II.

9-10:30PM*

Dracula

PBS, TV-MA-SV

It's the PBS blue-plate special: sexy but sexless.

*check local listings

10-11PM

Battlestar Galactica

Sci Fi, TV-14-LV

Ooh, a Katrina episode: "Racism, illness, and murder run rampant as Galactica's medical team struggles to curb an epidemic triggered by Sagittaron refugees."

10-11PM

Crossing Jordan

NBC, TV-14-V

Crossing Jordan clings to Las Vegas in one of their rage-against-the-dying-of-the-light crossovers.

SUPERFRIEND ALERT!

10:01-11PM

Brothers & Sisters

ABC

We don't know who to hug first: Margot Kidder as Nora's crazy pal Emily, or *Bros*' casting agent.



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A BRITISH TERRORIST ON U.S. SOIL?
NOTHING IS WHAT IT SEEMS.

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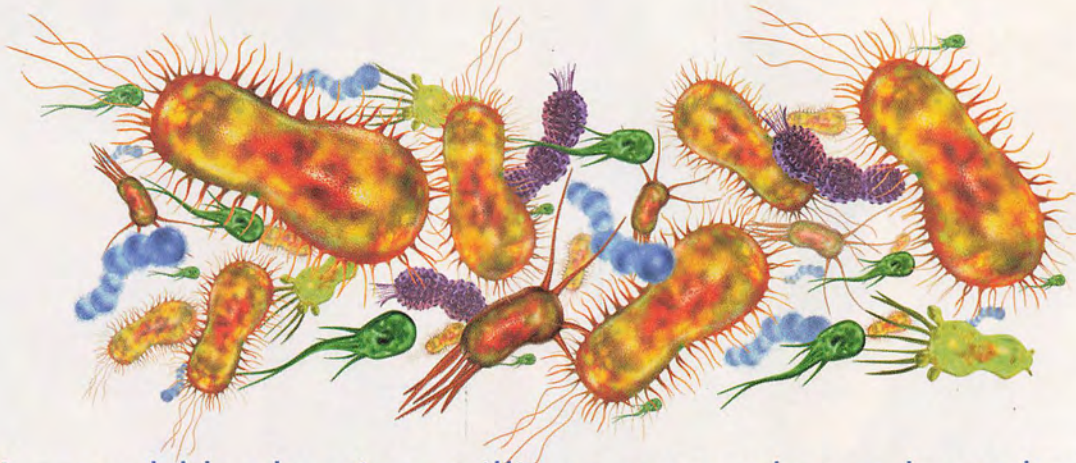
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High art: FOB's Wentz, Andy Hurley, Joe Trohman, and Stump (from left)

Boy Wonders

Fall Out Boy's winning new album speaks right to the kids. Adults ought to listen too.

BY JODY ROSEN



Fall Out Boy
Infinity On High
(Island)
Rock

Could it possibly be a coincidence that the first song on Fall Out Boy's follow-up to their smash second album is called "Thriller," the title of Michael Jackson's ne plus ultra of pop blockbusters? No, it couldn't: With these perpetually arch emo kingpins, you can be sure all music-biz in-jokes are intentional. The song, belted out by singer Patrick Stump over caffeine-charged punk-pop guitar jolts, is a meditation on Fall Out Boy's favorite theme, Fall Out Boy, that mixes paeans to loyal fans ("Our hearts beat for the diehards") with what is either a parody of rock-star grandeur or the genuine article: "I can take your problems away with a nod and a wave/Of my hand." The guy yammering over the song's opening strains? That's Def Jam president Jay-Z, Fall Out Boy's pal—another reminder, for those who may have missed the point, that the little band from Chicagoland has graduated to the ranks of pop royalty.

Fall Out Boy have reason to gloat. The theatrical and irreverent third-generation emo that they pioneered has become a certifiable subgenre, inspiring hit acts like their protégés Panic! At the Disco. But *Infinity* proves they're the masters of this peculiar art. The guiding force is bassist-lyricist Pete Wentz, responsible for "You're Crash-

ing, but You're No Wave," "The Carpal Tunnel of Love," and other exuberantly pun-filled songs that both wallow in and lampoon emo angst. "A penny for your thoughts/But a dollar for your insides/And a fortune for your disaster/I'm just a painter... And I'm drawing a blank," Stump sings in the galloping power-pop blast "Don't You Know Who I Think I Am?" Like all Fall Out Boy lyrics, it's not quite as clever as Wentz seems to think, and his obsession with posers, lame "scenes," and, above all, his own band might annoy listeners not currently enrolled in high school. But Wentz's words have a pleasing vernacular spunkiness—this is the Esperanto of young American suburbia, poetry of the mall and the chat room. Who but Wentz would brag, "Every dotcom's refreshing for a journal update"?

EW PICK

Of course, it's the loud, jagged sound that really moves the kids. FOB's guitars still blare, and Stump has evolved into a superb frontman, with a voice that slides supplely from a bratty punk bark into a honeyed falsetto. But the pleasant surprise here is the band's new sense of swing: Several songs, including the hit "This Ain't a Scene, It's an Arms Race," dip winningly into R&B, a move aided by co-producer Babyface. Lo and behold, it turns out these pasty emo boys are a pretty great blue-eyed soul band. *Infinity* ain't exactly *Thriller*—but Maroon 5 better watch their backs. **A-**
>DOWNLOAD THIS: "The Take Over, the Breaks Over"



Backstory

★ Fall Out Boy fans might want to brush up on 19th-century art history: Pete Wentz has said *Infinity On High's* title comes from a letter written in 1888 by misunderstood painter Vincent van Gogh, the original emo antihero.

Patty Cool

An unflashy yet dazzling effort from singer-songwriter Griffin.

BY WILL HERMES



Children's hour: Griffin



Patty Griffin

Children Running Through (ATO)

Country-Rock

Folk-rocker Griffin is also one of country music's best songwriters, an elegant melodist who conjures complex emotions with small strokes. She's been covered by big-name fans, from the Dixie Chicks and Martina McBride to Jessica Simpson (who credits Griffin's "Let Him Fly" with helping her kiss off Nick Lachey). And this, her fifth studio album, may earn her more—it's the showcase of a confident singer successfully diversifying.

The most breathtaking song is "Trapeze," a harmony-rich Emmylou Harris duet that's a paradigm of Griffin's empathic alt-country. She also tries dark ballads ("Someone Else's Tomorrow") and gospel-style R&B ("Up to the Mountain [MLK Song]"). It doesn't all work; the Rickie Lee Jones soul of "Stay on the Ride" misses the beatnik

transcendence it's seeking. But Griffin's pure, mostly vibrato-free voice never misses, stretching vowels into ornate lines without oversinging.

You can imagine megastars magnifying these tunes: Natalie Maines hollering "No Bad News," Alicia Keys testifying on "Up to the Mountain." But it's hard to imagine them bettering them. Ten years into a career that's included two unreleased CDs and a failed major-label mass-marketing attempt, Griffin sounds sure of her own eclectic voice, and happy to let others court the mainstream for her. **A-** **DOWNLOAD THIS:** "Trapeze"

"Griffin's pure, mostly vibrato-free voice never misses, stretching vowels into ornate lines without oversinging."

The Disney Star Face-Off

In the 2006 TV-movie smash *'High School Musical,'* they were rivals: Vanessa Hudgens' sweet mathlete Gabriella vs. Ashley Tisdale's scheming drama queen Sharpay. Now their solo pop debuts are competing too. Who grabs the gold? —Leah Greenblatt

VANESSA HUDGENS

ASHLEY TISDALE

THE IMAGE

The California-bred 18-year-old pulls a classic *Grease* move, abandoning the Sweet Sandy cardigans and demure curls of her *HSM* alter ego for a glossier Bad Sandy singing persona.

The New Jersey native, 21, didn't get the guy in *HSM*—that honor went to her Kewpie-doll costar—but she did get the juicier role, and on her solo debut, she keeps it saucy.

THE SOUND

Her feathery vocals are served with a side of sexy-but-safe sass. Think J. Lo for the Mouse Ears set: dance-pop made medium *caliente*.

Thanks to A-list producers like the Matrix (Britney, Avril) and Scott Storch (50 Cent), Tisdale shines on several hot dance jams.

THE STANDOUT TRACK

Lead tune "Come Back to Me" excellently jacks a sample from soft-rock smash "Baby Come Back" by '70s band Player.

Forget sticking to the 18-and-under market; propulsive tracks "He Said She Said" and "Not Like That" are club bangers for any age.

THE VERDICT

Neither will give Mariah a run for her octaves, but Tisdale edges out Hudgens in the Battle of the Baby Divas. Her album's fiercer and more radio-ready.



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Bloc Party

A Weekend in the City
(Vice)

Rock

On their second album, the post-punkers attempt to portray 48 hours in the life of their native London. Over 51 minutes of techno-tweaked rock, yelpy, tortured singer Kele Okereke takes on a mix of dreary characters, from powder-snorting hedonists ("On") to bored blue-collar stiffs ("Waiting for the 7:18"). Too often, the music is less memorable than the ambitious subject matter. Still, drummer Matt Tong pumps out herculean disco-rock beats that'll work any nightclub into a froth.

B-—Michael Endelman
>DOWNLOAD THIS:
"I Still Remember"



Harry Connick Jr.

Oh, My NOLA
(Columbia)

Pop

You can't fault the cause (some proceeds from this New Orleans-themed CD will go to musicians displaced by Katrina) or song choices (from the jazz-age classic "Careless Love" to Allen Toussaint's "Yes We Can Can"). But while Connick oozes love for his hometown, sings with swing, and reels off barrel-house piano runs that'd make the late N'awlins genius Professor Longhair proud, the songs mostly glide by amiably, leaving little impression. In short, a bit dullsville—a word that could never describe that once and future great city on the Gulf Coast.

B-—JR
>DOWNLOAD THIS:
"Someday"



Ono

Yes, I'm a Witch
(Astralwerks)

Pop

These remixes provide an excellent refresher course on Yoko Ono's endlessly underappreciated musical career. Sixteen younger acts recast selections from Ono's back catalog in their own genres, surrounding her vocals with meditative folk strains (Cat Power, Porcupine Tree), pulsing electro beats (Peaches, Le Tigre), and jubilant chamber-pop arrangements (the Apples in Stereo, the Polyphonic Spree). The results should be required listening for anyone who doubts her continuing relevance to cutting-edge culture.

A-—Simon Vozick-Levinson
>DOWNLOAD THIS:
"Kiss Kiss Kiss"



Sondre Lerche and the Faces Down

Phantom Punch
(Astralwerks)

Rock

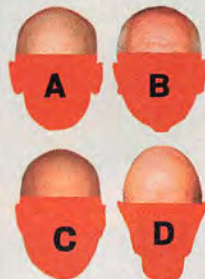
On 2006's jazzy *Duper Sessions*, the Norwegian singer-songwriter staked his claim as a cabaret tune-smith. This time out, he evokes '80s Britpop at its zenith, with Duran Duran-ish guitars and synths underpinning lyrically self-aware ditties like the title track. Quavering but sturdy, his tenor finds tenderness, longing, and regret in such downbeat acoustic gems as "Tragic Mirror." *Punch* may not pack the razzle-dazzle of *Duper*, but it just might help this gifted performer cement his rep for smartly crafted alt-pop.

B+—Ben Spier
>DOWNLOAD THIS:
"Phantom Punch"

Head Game

CLOSE SHAVES

No. 1 act Chris Daughtry has joined a small, musically diverse group of shaven music megastars. But is it as easy to tell apart their pates as their songs?



- ☐ 1. Chris Daughtry
- ☐ 2. Michael Stipe
- ☐ 3. Rob Halford
- ☐ 4. Peter Gabriel

A2, B4, C1, D3

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Rickie Lee Jones

The Sermon on Exposition Boulevard
(New West)
Rock

The onetime Tom Waits paramour and self-dubbed Duchess of Coolsville is definitely still cool, but she's also with Christ—transferring the folk L.A. aesthetic of her 1970s prime onto a Bible-centric narrative. These tracks are the antithesis of church-camp sing-alongs, enriched by roadhouse rhythms and her distinctive whiskey-soaked voice. *Sermon* is not quite as transcendent as some of her earlier work, but it's still vintage Rickie, and way more rocking than your average Sunday-school primer.

B—Leah Greenblatt
>**DOWNLOAD THIS:**
"Elvis Cadillac"



Pretty Ricky

Late Night Special
(Atlantic)
Rap

The four young Miami siblings who make up Pretty Ricky seem constitutionally incapable of thinking about anything but sex. Their second album pairs steamy slow-jam hooks with a ceaseless stream of crass, formulaic rhymes; requests like "Can I put a little peer pressure on you?"/"Cause I know you want it" are as close as these guys get to romantic banter. Hearing one of their explicit hits—like this CD's "On the Hotline"—is a degrading experience, but listening to their juvenile boasts for 47 straight minutes is flat-out boring. **C-**—SVL
>**DOWNLOAD THIS:**
"Push It Baby"



Katharine McPhee

Katharine McPhee
(RCA/19)
Pop

Great voice—better than it sounded on *American Idol*—but wow, McPhee is working with some poor material. There's the painful rapping on "Open Toes," which also has the dubious distinction of adding to the catalog of Idol Odes to Random Footwear (see Kellie Pickler's "Red High Heels"); the single "Over It," which sounds like a JoJo leftover; and some mid-tempo ballads that Mariah would've deemed too banal in 1991. Only on the Baby-face-penned "Everywhere I Go" does a snapshot of an intriguing Toni Braxton-esque pop star develop. **C+**—Henry Goldblatt
>**DOWNLOAD THIS:**
"Everywhere I Go"

THE CHART

TOP ALBUMS

1 PRETTY RICKY

Don't call 'em "little" Ricky. The R&Bers' second CD sold 132K—2007's first six-figure debut.



THE TOP 20

		LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART
1	PRETTY RICKY <i>Late Night Special</i> , Atlantic	—	1
2	THE SHINS <i>Winning the Night Away</i> , Sub Pop	—	1
	➔ A No. 2 bow—with 118,000 copies sold—is certainly nothing to wince at. The previous release from the formerly underground rockers peaked a little farther down the chart: No. 86.		
3	DAUGHTRY <i>Daughtry</i> , RCA	1	10
4	VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>2007 Grammy Nominees, Strategic Marketing</i>	—	1
	➔ Who wants to hear "SexyBack" and "Jesus, Take the Wheel" on the same album? The 77,000 fans who bought this year's Grammy sampler, apparently. Also debuting this week: John Mellencamp, who signed up 56,000 "Our Country"-men, and Saliva, who appealed to 31,000 drooling acolytes.		
5	JOHN MELLENCAMP <i>Freedom's Road</i> , UMe/Universal Republic	—	1
6	VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>Dreamgirls</i> soundtrack, Music World/Columbia	2	8
7	AKON <i>Konvicted</i> , SRC/Universal	5	11
8	ROBIN THICKE <i>The Evolution of Robin Thicke</i> , Interscope	16	17
9	VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>Jump In!</i> soundtrack, Disney	3	3
10	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE <i>FutureSex/LoveSounds</i> , Jive/Zomba	6	20
11	CORINNE BAILEY RAE <i>Corinne Bailey Rae</i> , Capitol	4	32
12	NICKELBACK <i>All the Right Reasons</i> , Roadrunner	8	69
13	BEYONCÉ <i>B'Day</i> , Columbia	10	21
14	CARRIE UNDERWOOD <i>Some Hearts</i> , Arista Nashville	9	63
15	NELLY FURTADO <i>Loose</i> , Mosley/Geffen	12	32
16	VARIOUS ARTISTS <i>NOW That's What I Call Music! Vol. 23</i> , Sony	7	12
17	RASCAL FLATTS <i>Me and My Gang</i> , Lyric Street	13	43
18	YOUNG JEEZY <i>The Inspiration</i> , CTE/Def Jam	14	7
19	SALIVA <i>Blood Stained Love Story</i> , Island	—	1
20	REGINA SPEKTOR <i>Begin to Hope</i> , Sire	34	12

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OSCAR, THE GROUCH?

When the Academy devoted three out of the five Best Original Song Oscar nominations to tunes from *Dreamgirls* (the others were from *Cars* and *An Inconvenient Truth*), it neglected some of the most ear-catching movie tunes from '06. —ME



CHRIS CORNELL
"You Know My Name"
The grunge-era belter delivers a musically suave, lyrically ominous rock tune that is perfect for *Casino Royale*'s dark reboot of the spy franchise.



SEAL
"A Father's Way"
An uplifting flick deserves an uplifting song. The Brit balladeer's contribution to *The Pursuit of Happyness* is a chest-swelling anthem that avoids lazy sentimentality.



JACK JOHNSON
"Upside Down"
Curious George may be a cartoon, but Johnson's hippie-dippy boogie isn't kid stuff. The sweet message and breezy tune could charm any family member.



DEVOTCHKA
"Til the End of Time"
Little Miss Sunshine's musical high point, "Super Freak," isn't eligible, but this Gypsy-inflected folk song from the Colorado indie act is almost as good.

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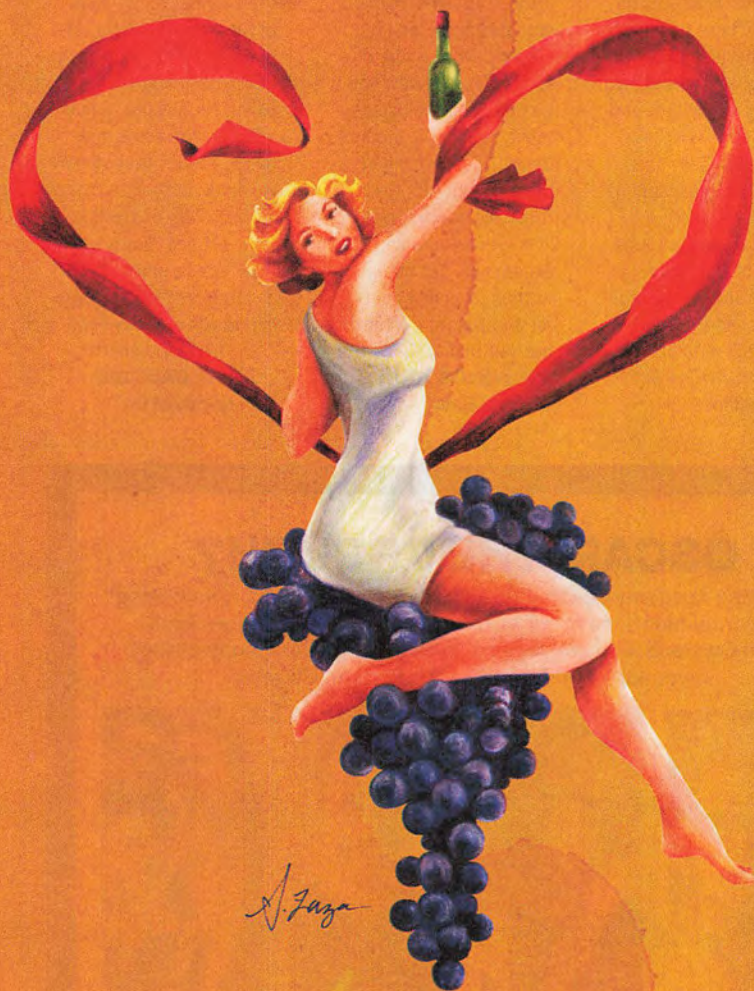
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Patterson
Cracks
another case

One False 'Step'

James Patterson and his coauthor kick off a new series with a by-the-numbers thriller.

BY JENNIFER REESE



Step on a Crack
James
Patterson
and Michael
Ledwidge
Thriller

To make the cut as a fictional sleuth today, you don't really need a personality, just a trademark gimmick: You're a gourmet cook; you love cats; you're claustrophobic; or, like Michael Bennett, the hero of James Patterson and Michael Ledwidge's *Step on a Crack*, you're raising 10 kids in Manhattan on a cop's salary.

Ludicrous, of course, but who expects realism from a breezy throwaway thriller like this one? The first in a projected series, the novel opens as Michael's saintly wife, Maeve ("She took on cancer the way an outclassed Jake LaMotta took on Sugar Ray Robinson in the fifties, with an epic ferocity not to be believed"), lies dying in the hospital. Between putting in time at poor Maeve's bedside and shepherding their flock through the city streets—a spectacle that "tugs at the coiled-steel heartstrings of the Big Apple's residents"—this single dad and widower-to-be somehow has ample time and emotional energy to face down the city's diabolical new evildoer: the Neat Man.

Killers need trademark gimmicks too, and the Neat Man's consist of compulsively dabbing his hands with Wetnaps as he executes his admirably byzantine scheme. After dispatching the

allergic former First Lady of the United States with some peanut oil drizzled on her foie gras, he gets down to his true business: hijacking her A-list funeral. When the earthy talk-show host, the trumpy pop singer, the OxyContin-addicted fashionista, and dozens of the late First Lady's millionaire pals have settled into the pews of New York City's St. Patrick's Cathedral, the doors slam shut. As one of the Neat Man's apprentices says, "It's time to put the fun back into funeral."

Sadly, he never quite gets around to it. Patterson and his new coauthor have coined some nasty, cineplex-ready lines ("I'll make things so bad, Prada will be coming out with a body bag this season"), but the static standoff plot bears an uncanny resemblance to Spike Lee's *Inside Man*, without the star wattage to light it up. And then there are the shameless allusions to United 93 (or is it *United 93?*) as a handful of stout-hearted hostages move on their captors. It's right there on the page, appropriated to juice up this cheap thriller: "Let's roll."

Michael, unfortunately, never rolls; throughout most of the catastrophe, he observes, negotiates, narrates, and shuttles between the drama at the cathedral, the unearned pathos in the cancer ward, and his absurd household, a protagonist so lacking in cunning and originality that even 10 more children couldn't set him apart from the generic-detective pack. **C+**



Backstory

+Since co-writing 1996's *Miracle on the 17th Green* with Peter de Jonge, Patterson has often worked with a coauthor who drafts the novel from his own plot outlines. New partner Michael Ledwidge (above) has written three thrillers under his own name, including 2001's *Bad Connection*.

FROM CHINATOWN TO 'TALK OF THE TOWN'



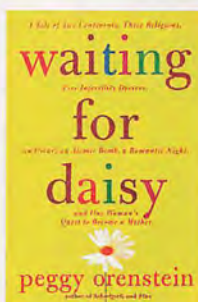
THE EIGHTH PROMISE

William Poy Lee Lee, who grew up in San Francisco's hardscrabble Chinatown housing projects in the 1960s, offers both his and his mother's perspective—half the chapters are written in her voice—on immigrant life, traditional values, and family tragedy. **Telling Words** "Our lives are not the stuff of a quaint ethnological story...a misty harking back to a romanticized past." **Lowdown** Peppered with wit and sarcasm, this gracefully told saga forgoes melodrama. **A-**—Hannah Tucker



INFIDEL

Ayaan Hirsi Ali Somali-born Hirsi Ali—who collaborated with filmmaker Theo van Gogh on *Submission*, the film about Muslim women that led to his 2004 murder—recounts her terrorized childhood in Africa and, much later, her embattled political career in Holland. **Telling Words** On her arranged marriage: "I could just see, very clearly and dispassionately, the bars closing in on me." **Lowdown** Hirsi Ali sacrifices stylish prose in her scathing critique of Islam. **B**—HT



WAITING FOR DAISY

Peggy Orenstein The journalist details her six-year quest to have a baby in vivid, often excruciating detail. **Telling Words** "I'd been through six months of Clomid, two rounds of IVF, three miscarriages, and a year of acupuncture." **Lowdown** Orenstein renders her experience in beautiful prose, but there isn't much to differentiate it from all the other fertility memoirs glutting the market. (There's definitely such a thing as too many books on the same topic!) **B**—Tina Jordan

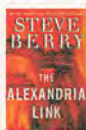


WISH I COULD BE THERE

Allen Shawn The author is (1) a multiphobic middle-aged man; (2) the son of legendary *New Yorker* editor William Shawn; and (3) a composer. In that order, judging from his jittery, brittle mix of the scientifically factual and the personal. **Telling Words** "Overall I believe that the tensions and paradoxes of [my father's] nature were rather successfully balanced as if in some kind of psychic isometric exercise." **Lowdown** Diagnosis: borderline autobiophobia. **C+**—Lisa Schwarzbaum

The Alexandria Link

Steve Berry
Thriller



Berry treads familiar territory in his follow-up to last year's best-seller *The Templar Legacy*, placing ex-secret agent Cotton Malone at the heart of another worldwide conspiracy. In *Link*, Malone races to save his kidnapped son from a mysterious cabal trying to solve ancient riddles that pinpoint the location of the lost Library of Alexandria. And while Berry occasionally twists himself into implausible plot pretzels, the lapses are quickly forgotten due to the sheer number of cliff-hangers. Malone, a hero with a personal stake in the proceedings, is a welcome respite from the cold, calculating superspies who litter the genre. **B**—Paul Katz

Bambi vs. Godzilla

David Mamet
Nonfiction



If you learn nothing else from Mamet's book about Hollywood's inner workings—based on the Oscar nominee's own wheelings and dealings in L.A.—it's that his vocabulary is a lot better than yours. *Concubiscent*? For a guy who writes such succinctly explicit dialogue, his prose can get grossly verbose. Mamet's observations on the film industry aren't exactly illuminating—he's shocked, *shocked*, to find that there's greed and bad taste going on here—but at least he offers some savvy words of wisdom to prospective screenwriters. "Storytelling," he advises, "is like sex. We all do it naturally. Some of us are better at it than others." **C+**—Benjamin Svetkey

Catherine the Great

Virginia Rounding
Biography



Like Marie Antoinette, 18th-century empress Catherine the Great has been tarred by rumors, many of them salacious. This engrossing bio sweeps aside the myths (e.g., she didn't die under a horse) for a full-bodied portrait of the plump German princess who seized Russia's throne. Yes, Catherine was ruthless (overthrowing her husband and possibly condoning his murder) and avidly sexual. But she was also compassionate, building schools and clinics. Rounding's spare prose is an ideal foil for Catherine's wickedly tart "scribblings." Is it possible Sofia Coppola picked the wrong historical heroine? **A**—Ben Spier

Flower Confidential

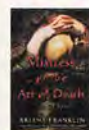
Amy Stewart
Nonfiction



This thorns-and-all exposé of the blossom business is no scandal-packed dishfest. While the intricacies of, say, the Dutch tulip market are almost snooze-inducing—especially if you can't tell a hyacinth from a hydrangea—things perk up when the author moves out of greenhouses and into florists. She visits small, well-kept-secret shops (like the NYC gem Flowers of the World) and high-volume discounters (\$700 will get you an entire wedding's worth of roses at Costco), and her cut-flower care guide is stem-tastic: To keep your Valentine's Day bouquet fresh for days, add a pinch of crushed Viagra. **B**—Melissa Rose Bernardo

Mistress of the Art of Death

Ariana Franklin
Mystery



In 12th-century Cambridge, four children are murdered, and the locals blame rich Jews. Since King Henry II depends on their tax income, Salerno-trained doctor Adelia Aguilar is called to investigate at a time when pathologists—much less female ones—are exceedingly rare. What follows is an episode of *CSI: Middle Ages*: Adelia uncovers forensic clues while fighting the backward beliefs of church officials and the anti-Semitic citizenry. Franklin's amusing period details (herbal remedies, Pythonesque nuns, a colorful string of medieval curses) turn a gory mystery into a bloody good show. **B+**—Bob Cannon

The Human Touch

Michael Frayn
Philosophy



The author: a Brit known for the plays *Noises Off* and *Copenhagen*.

The target audience: anyone who enjoys gaping at the complexities of existence. The topic: everything. Frayn motors through the universe in this fantastic series of essays—imagining the birth of arithmetic, riffing on linguistics, and quibbling with Stephen Hawking about the nature of time, for instance—and he describes all these mind-teasers with a clarity that inspires trust and fondness. Early on, Frayn declares that his meditation will “go this way and that, without any particular system,” and he does not break the promise. But no one ever said life was simple. **A**—Troy Patterson

The Grave Tattoo

Val McDermid
Thriller



Scholar Jane Gresham may be on the verge of finding a lost Wordsworth

epic recounting the mutiny on the *Bounty*. If only Jane were more discreet; she tells everyone who'll listen why she's so certain the poem exists. What little tension can be found in this dull, workmanlike thriller comes from thinly drawn baddies who want a piece of the action. McDermid also throws in a corpse in a bog that may be Fletcher Christian's, a first-person account of the mutiny, and a teenage girl on the run from a horrific, unrelated crime. By the time the novel finally starts sailing in the last 50 pages, you're ready to throw it overboard. **C+**—Jeff Giles

The Dead Fathers Club

Matt Haig
Novel



Philip, an 11-year-old Brit, starts receiving visits from the ghost of his father, a pub owner who just died in a car accident. Dad blames his brother for his death and begs Philip to kill said uncle, who's getting awfully cozy with the boy's mum. Sound a tad familiar? Haig's update of *Hamlet* is clever, and Philip's narration nicely captures a studied, Had-donesque naïveté (“Uncle Alan who is Dads brother was there wearing his suit that was tight with his neck pouring over like the beer over the glass”). Alas, poor Yorick, the pastiche falls apart toward the end, when our once-likable hero gets mired in the nitty-gritty of revenge. **B**—Thom Geier

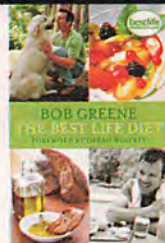
THE CHARTS

HARDCOVER BEST-SELLERS

1

THE BEST LIFE DIET

With America one of the world's most obese nations, it's not surprising to find two diet books atop the nonfiction chart this week.



NONFICTION TOP 10

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	THE BEST LIFE DIET Bob Greene ➔ <i>If a book's at No. 1, chances are there's an Oprah connection. Bingo. Greene is best known as the personal trainer who helped the TV host manage her weight loss over the years.</i>	4
2	YOU: ON A DIET Michael F. Roizen, M.D., and Mehmet C. Oz, M.D.	11
3	THE AUDACITY OF HOPE Barack Obama	13
4	THE PROPER CARE & FEEDING OF MARRIAGE Laura Schlessinger	3
5	THE INNOCENT MAN John Grisham	14
6	MARLEY & ME John Grogan	62
7	JIM CRAMER'S MAD MONEY James J. Cramer with Cliff Mason	6
8	THE SECRET Rhonda Byrne	3
9	I FEEL BAD ABOUT MY NECK Nora Ephron	24
10	THE GOD DELUSION Richard Dawkins	14

FICTION TOP 10

		WEEKS ON LIST
1	PLUM LOVIN' Janet Evanovich	2
2	FOR ONE MORE DAY Mitch Albom	16
3	CROSS James Patterson	9
4	YOU SUCK Christopher Moore ➔ <i>Moore follows last year's hit 'A Dirty Job' with a comic vampire love story that reprises characters from 1995's 'Bloodsucking Fiends.'</i>	1
5	NEXT Michael Crichton	7
6	THE HUNTERS W.E.B. Griffin	3
7	THE SUSPECT John Lescroart ➔ <i>'The Suspect,' which has nearly 150,000 copies in print, is Lescroart's 17th thriller since he began with 'Son of Holmes' in 1986. Since 2001, he's published one book per year.</i>	1
8	DEAR JOHN Nicholas Sparks	11
9	SHADOW DANCE Julie Garwood	4
10	BAD BLOOD Linda Fairstein	1

SOURCE: PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, WEEK OF JAN. 11-17, 2007

From Our Columnist

'THE DARK TOWER'



Look out, Spider-Man, here comes the Gunslinger. As if Stephen King didn't have enough fans, the EW columnist is tapping the comic-book market with *The Dark Tower*, a graphic adaptation of his epic fantasy-Western. The seven-issue series, drawn by Jae Lee and co-written by Peter David and Robin Furth, focuses on the backstory of Roland Deschain, the protagonist of King's seven novels. “If we were dealing with superheroes here, we'd call it an origin story,” says King, whose scenes of

Deschain as a teen in book No. 4, *Wizard and Glass*, form the basis for the comics.

King likens the comic to more mature graphic novels such as *A History of Violence*: “There are some that are an interesting hybrid between the superhero comics and the novels that I read as an adult.” And while many would like to see *The Dark Tower* on the big screen, King is wary. To a degree. “If Peter Jackson came along and said, ‘I made up with New Line and they want to spend billions of dollars on this,’ I’d say sure, knock yourself out.” In other words, fans, don’t look for that movie anytime soon. —Gilbert Cruz



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AWARD SEASONED

By Dalton Ross

For a weekly, expanded version of *The Glutton*, or to talk back to Dalton, go to ew.com/glutton

Who will win? Marty or Clint? Helen or Meryl? Eddie or Marky Mark? Frankly, when it comes to the Oscars, I never really care about these big-name battles, so I went smaller in my search for a nominee upon whom to bestow the first Official Glutton Oscar Endorsement. And that is where I found Kevin O'Connell. Along with Greg P. Russell and Fernando Camara, O'Connell is nominated in the Sound Mixing category for his work on *Apocalypto*. Granted, it is a somewhat odd choice for me. For one thing, I know nothing about sound mixing. For another, I know nothing about sound mixing. Oh, and then there's this—I haven't even seen the film.

But no matter; Kevin is my man. You see, here is the thing about Kevin O'Connell. He's been nominated before. A few times. Oh, who am I kidding, *Apocalypto* marks his 19th—yes, 19th—nomination. Just one problem: The first 18 times didn't go so hot, and O'Connell remains winless. (Go ahead, insert your own Susan Lucci joke here.) I took it upon myself to launch a full-scale promotional blitz for Kevin, and called him on the day of his latest nomination to share the awesome news that he had received the highly sought-after Official Glutton Oscar Endorsement. Kevin was moved, but then again, it had been a moving day. He had just gotten back from visiting a nursing home where his 83-year-old mother, Skippy O'Connell, is recovering from a massive stroke she suffered 12 days prior. (She was also diagnosed with a malignant brain

tumor in November.) It was Skippy—a former employee in the sound department at 20th Century Fox—who'd helped Kevin get out of firefighting and into the movie business back in 1977. "I just went out there this morning when I heard I was nominated to tell her," said O'Connell, 49. "The emotion that happened in that room at that hospital today with the hugs and kisses and tears is more than anything in the past 20 years that has ever happened to me."

I was starting to get a bit mushy myself hearing Kevin's story, but had to shake it off. After all, we had an Oscar campaign to run! First thing up was settling on a catchy slogan. I suggested either "Vote O'Connell: The O Is for Oscar" or "19th Time's the Charm!" but Kevin didn't seem particularly impressed. (A perfectionist! We can use that!) While we mulled over other options, I tried to get him to start talking a little smack about the other nominees ("Just who does this Bob Beemer clown think he is anyway?"), figuring a war of words could drum up a little press, but Kevin wasn't having that, either. "Bob is a good mixer," he replied. "I don't really have anything bad to say about those guys." (He's humble, too! Totally usable!)

Amazingly, Kevin remains completely upbeat despite not winning for films like *Top Gun*, *Terms of Endearment*, *Twister*... and those are just the ones that begin with the letter T. "I believe every year I get nominated that it's a gift," he says. "There are worse things that could happen to a guy than being nominated 19 times and not winning. There are no sour grapes here." How decent is this man? He even promised to thank me for my support in his acceptance speech should he finally take home the golden statue. But what if the orchestra cuts him off, I worried. "After 18 times of me not getting up there and giving speeches, I think I can get a little leeway," jokes O'Connell. "Plus, I'm a sound man. All I gotta do is pull the plug on that orchestra." So to the Academy, I humbly say: VOTE O'CONNELL! And to this year's Oscars conductor, I say: Don't even *think* about it. ■



"Apocalypto marks Kevin O'Connell's 19th Oscar nomination. Just one problem: The first 18 times didn't go so hot."

THE FIVE

The Five Worst Movie Roles by Athletes-Turned-Actors

1. Bruce Jenner in *Can't Stop the Music*
Don't IOC bylaws stipulate Olympic medals must be returned for starring in a film about the Village People?



2. Rosey Grier in *The Thing With Two Heads*
Black convict and white bigot share one body—and approximately 10,000 unintentional laughs.



3. Brian Bosworth in *Stone Cold*
"The Boz" goes undercover in a biker gang for a movie that was even less memorable than his football career.



4. Julius "Dr. J" Erving in *The Fish That Saved Pittsburgh*
A hoops team of all Pisces makes about as much sense as *The Thing With Two Heads*.



5. Shaquille O'Neal in *Kazaam*
When all is said and done, it basically comes down to two words: rapping genie. Oh, one more: sucks.





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